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Printed for Sam^{ll}. Chapman at y^e angell in pallmall,

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THE
Fire of the Altar :

Or, Certain

DIRECTIONS

HOW TO

Raife the *SOUL* into *Holy Flames*,
Before, At, and After, the Recei-
ving the Blessed SACRAMENT

OF THE

LORD'S SUPPER.

With suitable *Prayers* and *Devotions*.

To which is prefix'd

A DIALOGUE betwixt a *Christian* and
his own *Conscience*, concerning the
True Nature of the

CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

The Thirteenth Edition.

By ANTHONY HORNECK, D. D.
late Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty, and
Prebendary of WESTMINSTER.

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and sold by him at the *Angel* near the Dial in
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This Book is bound up with Common-Prayers, and to be
had at the Places abovesaid.





To my Beloved
PARISHIONERS,
The Inhabitants of
St. Mary - le - Strand,
AND THE
Precinct of the SAVOY.

THO' I intend you a larger Treatise
upon the Sacrament of the Lord's
Supper, by the Name and Title of
The CRUCIFIED JESUS; yet
I was willing to let these Directions come forth,
to prepare your Hearts for those larger Me-
ditations; not but that there are Books enough
already writ upon this Subject, and by abler Pens
too: But you having for some Years past known
my Conversation, my Temper, my Exhortations,
A 2 and

The Epistle

and my Manner of Speaking and Writing, I thought something of this Nature might be more useful to you, than other more elaborate Lucubrations. There is nothing I am more afraid of, than that the Generality of you, both Young and Old, either have not, or will not have, right Apprehensions of that Christian Religion you profess; some being apt to place it in a careless, customary Belief of the Doctrine; some in leaving a few notorious Sins; others in saying their Prayers; others in doing no Body wrong; others again in having good Desires and pious Inclinations. All which Opinions are notorious Mistakes of the Nature and Temper of Christianity, which imports a Change of Nature, Disposition, and acting contrary to the Humours, Passions, Manners, Customs, and Deportment of the World: And this is it I must see and perceive in you, before I can conclude that my Pains and Labours among you have not been in vain.

Brethren, My Heart's Desire and Prayer to God for you, is, that you may be sav'd. I will assure you this is no Complement, no Form of Speech, no Words in Course; but the ardent Wish of my Soul, and my fervent Prayers Day and Night; this is the Desire of my Soul in private and in publick: For this I fill my Mouth with Arguments to that God who heareth Prayers, even then when you do not think of me: For this I study and take Pains, and am willing to spend

Dedicatory.

spend my self, and to be spent; and your Salvation is the great Object of my Care: For this End I venture your Anger, and caress your Love: For this End I walk blameless among you, and am tender of your Welfare: For this End I reprove, and exhort, and intreat you, and run, and spend my Breath, and all that you may be sav'd.

I am not ignorant of the Devil's Devices: I am sensible of the Nature of Sin, how apt it is to deceive you; and though I am not with you in all Places, I see by the Effects how the Enemy of your Souls deals with you, and what will be the Issue of a careless Life. I consider the Shrieks of the Damn'd in Hell, and would fain keep you from that dangerous Gulph. I see you stand upon the Brink of Destruction, and cannot forbear calling to you, O! do your selves no Harm! The greatest Kindness you can do me, the greatest Gratitude you can express, the greatest Civility and Respect you can shew me, is to do according to the wholesome Counsels I do give you. Whatever Constructions some of you may put upon these Adjurations, the Searcher of all Hearts knows this to be true, That I will rejoyce in nothing so much as in your Obedience to the Gospel.

I would fain rejoyce with you in the great Day of the Lord Jesus: I would fain see you glorious Saints in the everlasting Mansions: I

The Epistle

would fain see you shine as the Stars in the Firmament of Heaven: I would see you triumph with Angels, sing with Cherubims, and join the celestial Choir in eternal Praises. Think what a dismal Sight it will be in that Day, to see some of you weeping and howling in the burning Lake, that might have feasted with the Son of God, in his Father's Kingdom. We that meet together in the Church militant here, what a happy, what a glorious Sight would it be, to meet all in the Church triumphant, when these Bodies do drop from us!

It is no small Grief to me to see some of you, who have liv'd for some Tears under my Ministry, given to the same Sins and inordinate Desires, as Drunkenness, Swearing, Lying, Cheating, Dissembling, Malice, Wrath, Hatred, Passion, Carelessness and Neglect of the Lord's Supper, Quarrelling, foolish Festing, filthy Talk, Frotness, Pride, Uncleaness, &c. they were formerly enamour'd with: Certainly this must be an Argument against you in that Day, when God shall judge the Secrets of Man by the everlasting Gospel. O let's not be forc'd to complain of you, that we would have heal'd you and you would not be heal'd. To this End beseech you;

1. To make the Rules in the following Treatise familiar to you. There is nothing in it but what you'll find exactly agreeable to the Word, on which you build your Faith: By me

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Dedicatory.

king them familiar to you, I do not only mean getting them by Heart, but applying your selves to the serious Practice of them, 'till you get a Habit of those Virtues. A single Act now and then, when you are in a religious Humour, will do no Good; but you must labour at them so long, 'till they come to be incorporated with your Spirits, and mingle with your Complexion and Constitution.

2. To oblige your Children and Servants to learn these Rules without Book, and to admonish them to try and see, whether they observe them in their Behaviour and Conversation; to ask them often, Whether their Actions are agreeable to these Rules, and whether they are not afraid of losing God's Favour, by neglecting so great Salvation?

But then you must shew them a good Example; for all your Exhortations will be but Wind, while you do not express the Possibility of living up to these Rules in your own Lives. Your Example will make these christian Virtues amiable, and your Practice must shew that you believe them necessary. And, Oh! how comfortable will it be upon your Death-Beds, and what Joy will this Testimony of your Conscience cause, that in godly Simplicity and Sincerity, not according to fleshly Wisdom, but according to the Grace of God, you have had your Conversation in the World? God will love you, even he whose Loving-kindness is better than Life it self: His
Love

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Love will close your Eyes: His Love will whisper the glad Tidings of Happiness in your Ears: His Love will be your Guide through the Shadow and Valley of Death; and this Love will see you safe within the Gates of a blessed Eternity. Which Love, that it may become your Portion and Inheritance, is, and shall be, the hearty Wish and Prayer of

Your faithful Friend and

28 SE60

Minister in Christ Jesus,

A. HORNECK.



T H E



THE
TRUE NATURE
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION,
IN A

*Dialogue betwixt a Christian and his
own Conscience.*

v 7 27 Feb 1714

Conscience.

Rouze, rouze thy self, and awake,
thou slumbering Sinner, and think
what that Religion means, thou
dost profess; and tell me inge-
nuously what it is to be a Christian?

Christian. It is not only to profess the
Doctrine of *Jesus Christ*, but also to live as
he liv'd; to have the same Mind and Spi-
rit

2 *The true Nature of the*

rit in me, that was in him; to act upon the great Principle of an unseen everlasting Glory, and to neglect all Things, rather than the Salvation of my immortal Soul. *John* 15. 10. *Phil.* 2. 5. *Matt.* 16. 26. *Heb.* 12. 1, 2.

Consc. Hast thou a Soul that's in a Possibility of being either eternally happy, or eternally miserable?

Christ. I have; for my Soul certainly is not of the same Nature with my Body, but is a spiritual Substance, rational, and intelligent, as Angels are; and therefore incorruptible, and signally differs from Beasts, being capable of obeying and disobeying God. *Matt.* 10. 28. *Psal.* 32. 9. *Rev.* 22. 2, 9. *Isa.* 1. 19, 20.

Consc. What if thy Soul be capable of obeying and disobeying God, doth that make it either happy or miserable?

Christ. Yes, certainly; for to the Obedient God hath faithfully promis'd eternal Life and Glory when they leave this World; and to the Disobedient he hath peremptorily threaten'd everlasting Anguish and Torment. *Rom.* 2. 6, 7, 8. *Heb.* 5. 9. *2 Thess.* 1. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Consc. What must thou then do to be sav'd?

Christ. I must necessarily obey the Precepts and Commands of my Lord, and Master, and Saviour, *Christ Jesus*, which he hath deliver'd, and enjoin'd either with his own Mouth

Mouth, or by his Apostles. *John* 14. 15, 21.
John 15. 14. 1 *Thess.* 4. 1.

Consc. What Precepts are those thou art bound to obey, in order to be sav'd?

Christ. 1. I must necessarily curb mine Anger and Passion, and be very meek to all Men in my Speeches, Answers, and Actions; gentle, and not much concern'd under any Affront or Injury done to my Person; or when any Thing is said or done which displeaseth me; and be ready to forgive and forget all Injuries.

I must not revile when I am revil'd; nor give ill Language to them that reproach me; nor revenge my self when it lies in my Power; nor call Men Fools and Rogues upon trivial Occasions.

I must so far love mine Enemies, as to do Good to them that hate me, if they either desire or want it; bless them that curse me, and pray for them that use me ill. *Matt.* 5. 22, 44. *Titus* 3. 2. *Rom.* 12. 7, 19. 1 *Pet.* 2. 21, 23.

2. I must be very humble, and have low and mean Thoughts of my self, and of my Worth, Knowledge, Fortune, Dignity, Riches, Means, and Condition in the World.

I must, when I address my self to God in Prayer or Praises, be very vile and base in my own Sight, and be asham'd to lift up my Eyes and Hands to God.

I must esteem other Men, in whom I see any Goodness, better than my self.

I must

I must not commend my self, nor take it ill if other People do not ; nor be fond of worldly Respect and Honour ; but must be civil, courteous, and obliging, even to the Meanest and Poorest, and regard the Honour that comes of God, more than the Honour which comes of Men. *Matt. 11. 29. Mark 10. 15. John 5. 44. Gal. 5. 26. 2 Sam. 6. 22.*

3. I must be kind, and tender-hearted and compassionate, and love to do Good to my Neighbour, either by good Advice and Counsel, or Reproof, if he go on in any known Sin ; or by my Means, and Money and Goods, if he be in want ; or by my Labour and Industry, if I can do no more according as my Ability and his Necessity require ; and if I know none, I must seek out Objects, upon whom and to whom I may do Good. *Gal. 6. 6, 9, 10. 2 Tim. 1. 17.*

4. I must shun all foreseen and known Occasions of Evil.

If by looking on a Man or Woman, and dishonest Lust or Desire rise in me, I must crush it, and look upon that Person no more. I must not go into Company, where I am sensible I shall be tempted and drawn into Sin ; whether it be Drunkenness, or Swearing, or Passion, or frothy or filthy Talk, or the like.

I must not touch any Thing that would raise any inordinate Appetite in me ; and must forbear gaudy Cloathing, and other extern

external Ornaments, if they prove Temptations to Pride and Loftiness, and Vanity of Spirit. *Matt.* 5. 28, 29, 30. *1 Tim.* 2. 9. *1 Pet.* 3. 3, 4.

5. I must labour to be very patient under any temporal Afflictions, whether Sickness, or Losses, or other Crosses and Disappointments; and neither murmur, nor repine, because God my Heavenly Father sends them, and has promised, that if I love him, to turn all these Troubles unto my unspeakable Good; and designs an infinite Recompence in Heaven for my Patience. *Jam.* 5. 7. *Rom.* 8. 28. *Heb.* 12. 7, 8, 9.

6. I must study great Simplicity in my Thoughts, Words, Actions, Garb, Cloaths, Furniture, Houses, Meat, Drink, and the like; and to avoid all Things that may put a Stop to my Progress in a Spiritual Life, and particularly all such Recreations as may dull and damp good Things in me, or bring upon me an Aversion to that Goodness and Simplicity, which was in Christ and his Apostles, and the primitive Christians. *2 Cor.* 1. 12. *Matt.* 10. 16. *Phil.* 1. 15. *1 Thess.* 5. 22.

7. I must, in all Places, where-ever I am, watch over my Thoughts and Speeches, Expressions and Actions, because God hears and sees me, and is every where present; and take heed, that neither any temporal Profit, nor Pleasure, nor the Favour of Men, make me say, or do, or comply with any

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6 *The true Nature of the*

Thing that is sinful, and I suspect to be so. *Psalms* 139. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Matt.* 12. 36. *Col.* 4: 6. *1 Thess.* 4. 4, 5, 6. *Acts* 5. 29.

8. I must not use Equivocations, or mental Reservations, when I speak; or take an Oath, or promise any Thing, or make a Bargain, or tell a Lye wittingly, or wilfully, though I might gain all the Riches of the World, or could save my Life by it; but speak the Truth, whenever I think fit to speak, or give an Answer, let the Inconvenience be what it will, or the Danger never so great, *Ephes.* 4. 28. *1 Pet.* 3. 15.

9. I must take special Notice of the various Dealings of God with my Soul and Body, and praise and admire him for those Providences, whether spiritual or temporal, as many as come within my Cognizance.

I must praise him, when I rise, when I lie down, when I sit up, when I walk, when I eat or drink, or get any lawful Gain, or Men are kind and favourable to me. *Ez.* 5. 11, 12. *Psal* 105. 5. *Matt.* 6. 26, 27, 28. *1 Cor.* 10. 31. *1 Thess.* 5. 18.

10. I must do the same Kindnesses, Favours, and Services to other Men, which I would have other Men, who are in such Circumstances, do to me, and therefore must be charitable, just, honest, faithful, sincere in all my Dealings with them, and put a good Construction on their doubtful Actions, because I would have them be so

and do so to me. *Matt.* 7. 12. *1 Cor.* 15. 4, 5, 6, 7. *Rom.* 13. 7, 8, 9.

11. According to the Condition, Calling, or Relation I am in, I must discharge my Duty belonging to that Calling, Condition, or Relation, with very great Conscientiousness; as a Servant, I must be faithful and respectful to my Master or Mistress; as a Son or Daughter, very tender of my Parents Welfare, Credit, and Command; as a Subject, obedient and loyal to the King, and those who are in Authority under him, in all lawful Things; as a Member of a publick Church, careful to preserve its Peace and Unity; as a Husband, or Wife, loving, kind, and amiable to my Yoke-fellow; and in the lawful Calling God hath plac'd me in diligent and industrious. *1 Pet.* 2. 13, 14, 18. *Eph.* 6. 1, 4, 5. *Col.* 3. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. *Col.* 4. 1. *Rom.* 12. 11.

12. I must delight to think of God, and delight to speak of spiritual Things, and delight to do the Will of God; and delight in all these, and in other good Works, more than in the gaudy Pomp, Glory, and Vanity of this present World.

I must use the World as if I used it not, and be very indifferent whether I have much of the World's Goods or no: And my chief Aim and Design must be to get a Share in God's everlasting Kingdom. *Matt.* 6. 33. *1 Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31. *Psal.* 112. 1. *Psal.* 139. 17. *Psal.* 119. 72.

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Confc. Why art thou oblig'd to do all this in Order to Salvation?

Christ. Partly, because God, my supream Governor, exprefsly commands these Things to be done; partly, because eternal Happiness is promis'd to none, but to such as in good Earnest apply themselves to the Performance of them; partly, because infinite Glory is a Thing of that Consequence, that it deserves these Pains, and this excellent Temper; partly, because the Love of God to me is so great, that I can do no less in common Gratitude. *Matt.* 5. 20. *Matt.* 19. 17. *Luke* 12. 2. *2 Cor.* 5. 14.

Confc. What is that mighty Love of God, that challenges such Gratitude?

Christ. When with the rest of Mankind I was lost and undone in my first Parents, depriv'd of all Hopes of Mercy, and Pardon, and Salvation the eternal Son of God, to restore me to God's Favour, and to make me capable of Pardon, and eternal Salvation, took my Nature upon him, became Man, suffer'd and dy'd for me; and having by his Death purchas'd this Pardon and Salvation for me, offers me these Mercies upon Condition of obeying the aforesaid Precepts. *John* 3. 16. *Rom.* 5. 17, 21. *2 Cor.* 5. 19.

Confc. But what if thou hast not obey'd these Precepts of the Gospel, is there any Remedy or Hopes to recover the Favour of God?

Christ.

Christ. I must necessarily repent of my Disobedience with all Speed, and make it my Business, for the future, to live up to those Rules, in Despight of all Commands and Allurements from Men to the contrary: And upon this Repentance, sincere Resolution, and earnest Endeavours to obey them, I may certainly hope for Pardon and Salvation, because he hath promised it. *Matt.* 11. 28, 29. *Es.* 55. 7. *Joel* 2. 12, 13, 14.

Consc. But is it possible, dost thou think, for any Man to obey and live up to these Precepts?

Christ. If it were not possible for me to obey them, I cannot imagine why God should peremptorily require it of me: And therefore I may certainly so far obey them, as not to act wittingly, or wilfully, or deliberately against them; and so perform them, as to make them the settled Rule of my Thoughts, Desires, Words, and Actions; if I will but use the Means God has prescrib'd, in Order to this holy Obedience. *Matt.* 25. 26, 27. *1 Cor.* 10. 13. *1 John* 5. 2.

Consc. What are those Means whereby this holy Obedience may be attain'd?

Christ. They are eight, 1. Consideration and Thinking. 2. Earnest Prayer for the Assistance of God's Grace and Spirit. 3. Diligent hearing and reading the Word of God. 4. A taking Advice, and consulting with faithful Ministers of the Gospel. 5.

Self-Examination. 6. A right Apprehension of the Nature of God, and of spiritual Things. 7. Humbling the Soul with Fasting. 7. A conscientious Use of the two Sacraments the Son of God hath instituted and ordain'd.

Conf. How is Consideration and Thinking to be manag'd?

Christ. I must seriously and frequently retire, and think with my self, that surely God's Promises and Threatnings will be fulfill'd; that upon the Moment of my Death there depends Eternity; and what a sad and forlorn Condition I should be in, should eternal Anguish seize on my Soul when it leaves this World; and though God be patient, yet he will not be mock'd; that there is no Soul in Hell at this Time, but would be glad to obey God, if they might be free'd, and try'd once more here on Earth; that a Work of that Concern is not to be neglected for Trifles; that my Death is very uncertain, and a Death-Bed is no Place or Time to bring my self to a Habit of Obedience. *Deut.* 32. 29. *Psalms* 90. 12. *Psalms* 50. 22.

Conf. What is the Nature of Prayer, and earnest begging for Grace and Assistance of God's Spirit?

Christ. I must take Care that my Heart and Mind do pray as well as my Lips; I must be sensible of what I pray for, and fix my Thoughts upon God in Prayer, and earnestly

earnestly long for his Grace and Mercy, and be importunate with him, pray often, and with Fervour, like a Person that am concern'd at the Danger I am in; I must watch against wandring Thoughts, or expel them when they come in; and my Soul must esteem and prize the Grace of God, and Assistance of God's Spirit, above all the Advantages of the World, and be restless 'till I get it, and take Notice how God hears and answers my Prayers. *John* 4. 24. *Psalms* 66. 18. *Psalms* 63. 1. *Psalms* 16. 8.

Consc. What dost thou mean by diligent hearing and reading of the Word of God?

Christ. When I read or hear it, I must read and hear it with Attention and Resolution to know God's Will, that I may do it: Before I read and hear it, I must beg of God to enlighten me, and to imprint those good Lessons, I shall hear or read, upon my Soul; and to make them effectual to me, I must apply the general Commands I read and hear to my own Soul, and believe that what God commands all Men, as Christians and Believers, he commands me in particular. I must watch against worldly Thoughts, in reading and hearing, and remember I do sin, if I do not mind what I read or hear. *Luke* 8. 18. *Mark* 4. 24. *John* 5. 39. *Psalms* 119. 18.

Consc. In what Manner must thou ask Advice of faithful Ministers of the Gospel?

Christ.

Christ. I must go to those who are very serious, or send for any of them, and ask them about the State and Condition of my Soul; and what I must do to secure God's Favour, how I must go about the great Work of Salvation, and beg their Direction in performing the Will of God; and acquaint them how it is with me, what Temptations I am subject to, and what Corruptions I am inclin'd to, and intreat them to tell me, how to be rid of them, and oblige them to help me with their Prayers, and encourage me to a vigorous Pursuit of the everlasting Riches; and when I have done so, must follow their Advice and Counsel. *Acts* 16. 30, 31, 32. *Mark* 10. 17. *Phil.* 3. 17.

Consc. And what is to be done with Self-Examination?

Christ. I must frequently look into my Thoughts, Words, and Actions, and see whether they are agreeable to the Rules of the Gospel: Every Night I must take an Account of my self, and consider what I have been doing in the Day-time; whether I have not told a Lye, deceiv'd no Body, broke forth into no Passion, done Good, resisted Temptations, been often with God in Prayer, taken Notice of God's Providences, &c. that where I have done amiss, I may watch against it the next Day; and where I have done well, I may admire the Goodness of God, and praise him for it, *Psal.* 4. 4. *2 Cor.* 13. 5. *Lam.* 3. 40.

Consc.

Confc. What Apprehensions must thou have of God and spiritual Things?

Christ. I must believe,

1. That God is a Spirit, omnipresent, omniscient, infinitely good, and wise, and holy, and just, and will be a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and punish the Disobedient, either here or hereafter, or both here and hereafter. *Heb.* 11. 6. 2 *Thess.* 6, 7. *Psal.* 58. 11. *Psal.* 50. 21.

2. That this God is our supreme Governour, and hath reveal'd himself to be Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; or our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; and that there is some Resemblance of these three in Cne in the Sun, in which is the Light, Heat, and Beam, which three make but one Sun, 1 *John* 5. 7. *Matt.* 28. 19. 2 *Cor.* 13. 14.

3. That all Mankind fell in *Adam*, the first Man, and by that Fall mov'd God to withdraw his Love and Favour from them; and that God the Son, in Commiseration to our Nature, became Man of the Virgin *Mary*, suffer'd and dy'd; and, by his Death, render'd God the Father, or, rather the whole Trinity, kind and propitious to us, and willing to receive us into Favour, and to give us Pardon, and everlasting Life, upon the Conditions of Repentance and unfeign'd Obedience; and therefore justly call'd *Christ Jesus*, i. e. the anointed Saviour;

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viour. *Rom.* 5. 8, 9, 10. *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. *Matt.*
1. 21.

4. That the Scripture, where all this is reveal'd, is the Word of God; because the Men, who testify of these Things in Scripture, were inspir'd by the Holy Ghost, and, in Confirmation of it, wrought true Miracles, Miracles levell'd against the Power of Sin, and impossible to be done by human Strength: The Truth of which Miracles hath been convey'd down to Posterity by Multitudes of Eye-Witnesses, and from them receiv'd by all Christian People. *Heb.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4.

5. That the Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel will infallibly be fulfill'd sooner or later, because God cannot lye. *Matt.* 5. 17, 18. *Tit.* 1. 2.

6. That our Soul is not our Breath, nor our Blood, nor the Spirits of our Blood, but a spiritual Substance, able to live, and act without this gross Body we carry about us; and will immediately, upon leaving this Body, be oblig'd to appear before God, and to give him an Account of its good and evil Works; and according to the Prevalency or Predominancy of either, be made sensible of the Sentence of Absolution, or Condemnation, which shall be more solemnly pronounc'd at the Day of Judgment. *Luke* 16. 22, 23.

7. That at the End of the World there will be a solemn Day of Judgment, where

in the Bodies of all Men shall rise, and be re-united to their Souls; and their Thoughts, Words, and Actions, be brought to Light, and judg'd, and Sentence solemnly pronounc'd; and the Good commanded to take Possession of eternal Joys, and the Bad to go into everlasting Torments. 2 Cor. 5. 10. *Matt.* 25, 31, 46.

8. That God requires no more of us than we do of our Children and Servants, and that's *Love*; and that this *Love*, if it be true and hearty, must necessarily discover it self in Repentance and Sorrow for offending him, and a sincere Endeavour to please and obey him for the future. *Luke* 6. 46. *Malach.* 1. 6.

9. That tho' by Nature we are generally prone more to Evil than to Good, and have a stronger Byass to Sin than Righteousness, yet God the Holy Ghost, by his Power and Influences, will certainly assist, and help us to abhor that which is Evil, and to cleave to that which is Good; if so be, that by earnest Prayer, Fasting, and Meditation, we long and breathe for his Help and Influence. *Luke* 11. 13.

10. That all the Service I offer to God must be perform'd with my Mind, Will, and Affections, or with my inward Man, and with my Heart; and that without my Mind have the greatest Share in the Service, it is insignificant, and rejected by God. *Prov.* 23. 26. *Matt.* 22. 37.

11 That

11. That by believing in Scripture, for the most Part, is meant nothing but Obeying; and that he who obeys not the Precepts of the Gospel, doth not believe that they are either divine, or necessary to be obey'd, or that the Gospel is infallibly true, *Acts* 6. 7. *Heb.* 11. 24, 25, 26. 2 *Theff.* 1. 11.

12. That that Frame of Spirit which fits a Man for eternal Happiness, is neither a customary frequenting the Ordinances of God, nor shunning the grosser Sins and Vices of the Age we live in, nor being Master of a single Virtue; but a spiritual Temper of Mind, which puts us upon doing all that's necessary to be done in Order to Salvation. *Rom.* 8. 5, 9, 10.

Consc. What are the Rules to be observ'd in humbling the Soul with Fasting?

Christ. I must frequently, as often as my Strength will bear it, give my self to Fasting and Prayer; and on those Fasts wrestle with God for Growth in Grace and Strength, against those Sins I am most prone and inclin'd to, and greater Courage against Temptations.

I must give Alms on that Day, for the refreshing of some poor Member of Christ; and spend the Day in Supplications, and Contemplations of my Sins, and of the Wrath of God I have deserv'd, and of God's Mercy to penitent Sinners in Christ Jesus, and in holy Resolutions to be watchful

ful over my Heart for the Future, that I may perform these Duties I have formerly neglected, and imitate holy Men and Women in their virtuous Practices. *Ef.* 58. 6, 7. *Matt.* 6. 17, 18. *1 Cor.* 7. 5. *1 Cor.* 12. 7.

Consc. Wherein doth the conscientious Use of the holy Sacraments consist?

Christ. In entertaining right and suitable Notions of the Nature of these Sacraments, and using them to those Ends and Purposes for which they are design'd. *Rom.* 6. 3, 4. *1 Cor.* 10. 31.

Consc. What Notions must thou entertain about these Sacraments?

Christ. 1. That these Sacraments are of the Nature of solemn Vows and Protestations, that I will be faithful to God in Christ Jesus, by the Assistance of the Holy Ghost; or of the Nature of Covenants, where God and Man do mutually engage themselves one to another; or of the Nature of outward visible Signs, whereby some spiritual Thing is represented, and promis'd, and apply'd, and assuredly convey'd, *Rom.* 4. 11. *Exod.* 13. 9. *1 Pet.* 3. 20, 21. *1 Cor.* 10. 16, 17.

2. That these Sacraments are ordain'd and instituted by the Son of God, my Saviour; and that Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord, are all the Sacraments, that are either given by Christ to the Church, or need to be receiv'd by the Church of Christ. *Matt.* 28. 19. *1 Cor.* 11. 23.

C

3 That

3. That Baptism is a significant Ceremony, whereby Children, Men, and Women, are wash'd with Water; which Washing imports God's Pardon of our Sins, and our Duty to keep our selves pure from Sin for the Future; God promising the one, and we the other. *1 Pet. 3. 21. 1 Cor. 6. 11.*

4. That though Children can make no such Promises, yet it's fit they should be baptiz'd, because they are Part of the Nations which Christ enjoyns and orders to be baptiz'd, and are Disciples, and in the Covenant of Grace: And it's enough, that other Persons promise for them as their Guardians; which Promise they are bound to perform, when they come to be of Age. *Acts 2. 38, 39. 1 Cor. 7. 14.*

5. That the *Bread* and *Wine* set before the Congregation in the *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper*, represents, or puts me in Mind of the crucify'd Body and Blood of Christ; or rather of the Benefits of Christ's Death, which are Pardon of Sin and a Right to eternal Bliss: And, moreover, assures me, that if I eat and drink in this Sacrament with unfeigned Purpose of Mind to make Conscience of what ever Christ commands me, that the Benefits of Christ's Death and Sufferings, *viz.* God's Pardon and a Right to everlasting Glory, shall as verily be apply'd to me, and become one with my Soul, as the *Bread* and *Wine*, which represent these Benefits, become one with my Substance. *1 Cor. 10. 16.*

6. That coming to the Lord's Supper, is the strongest Engagement to a holy Life; because I do there personally, freely, and solemnly, remember the Death of Christ, and that my Sins caus'd his Death; and do protest to allow my self no longer in them, but to imitate Christ Jesus in his Meekness, Patience, Humility, Charity, and Goodness. 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.

Consc. How must these Sacraments be us'd, in Order to thy present and everlasting Comfort?

Christ. 1. As to Baptism, I must be baptis'd but once, because that initiates and admits me into the Fellowship of Christians, and gives me a Right and Title to the Use of the Means of Grace; and this need to be done but once: All that is to be done after this, is to keep a good Conscience towards God, and towards Man, in the Use of those Means, according to the Promise made for me, when I was wash'd with Water. *Eph.* 4. 5.

2. As to the *Supper of the Lord*, that requires my frequent Coming, because I stand in need of frequent renewing, not only to my Repentance, and Love to God, and Charity of my Neighbours; but the Motives and Enforcives to these Graces, whereof the Remembrance of the Love of God in the Death of Christ, is the greatest and most remarkable. 1 Cor. 11. 26.



T H E
Fire of the Altar:
 O R,
DIRECTIONS

Concerning the
Worthy Receiving of the Lord's Supper.

C H A P. I.

*A Preparatory Meditation to bring the
 Mind into a serious Frame.*

Conscience.

IS it not fit, O my Soul, thou shouldst
 pause a little on thy Redeemer's Death,
 before thou goest to remember it with the
 Congregation? There are those Charms
 in that Death, which, if rightly view'd,
 will be invincible Motives to thee to dye to

The Fire of the Altar. 21

a sinful Life, and to embrace the holy Life of Jesus.

Shouldst not thou think? Shouldst not thou cry?

I.

O! that I had Wings like a Dove, that I might fly away to *Golgotha*, and behold the dreadful Spectacle of God crucify'd for the Sins of the Children of Men! A mighty Mystery this! To the *Jews* a stumbling Block, and to the *Greeks* Foolishness; what all the *Jewish Rabbins* could not see, what the greatest Heathen Sages could not find out, that hath God reveal'd. O God! thy Ways are not as our Ways, nor are thy Thoughts as our Thoughts. We entertain mean Apprehensions of thee, such as our narrow Understandings yield; but thou lov'st to do all Things contrary to the Measure we poor Mortals take. This hath been thy Method ever since thou hast thought fit to plant a Church in the World! Thou didst send *Lot* into *Sodom*, and, contrary to Men's Imagination, didst preserve him from the Infection of that beastly Crew. In the Midst of an idolatrous Country, thou didst bid *Elijah* stand up, and declare thy Name to the besotted *Israelites*: A Place where to own the true God, was fatal, and to make Mention of thy Worship, Heresy: Where to profess the Faith, was counted Madness, and not to imitate the Luxury of the Age, a Crime

22 *The Fire of the Altar.*

unpardonable. Among the wicked Men of *Anathoth*, thou didst separate *Jeremiah* for the prophetick Office ; and in the Land of *Uz*, crouded with Pagans and Infidels, gav'st *Job* a Heart to fear thy Providence. Out of *Uz*, the Metropolis of *Chaldean* Superstition, thou didst call the belov'd *Abraham*, and vouchsafedst to him the Knowledge of thy Will, in a crooked and perverse Generation. Thou didst fill the bashful *Moses* with Courage to talk to Kings, and a timorous *Aaron*, by thy Order, can controul Atheists and Idolaters. Thou lov'st to create a beautiful World of nothing, and to call Things that are, out of those which do not appear. Thou lov'st to do Things which to us seem Impossibilities, and when the Fig-tree doth not blossom, lov'st to produce most pleasant Fruit. When Calamities are become dangerous and past Remedy, thou lov'st to shew thy healing Hand ; and when no Probabilities of Help appear, declarest thy Power and Glory. Thou lov'st to bring forth Grapes from Thorns, and Figs from Thistles ; and out of a barren Soil or curs'd Ground, many Times lettest the richest Spices grow. When all Mankind lay in Darknes, and was cover'd with the Shadow of Death ; when Devils play'd about them, and the Furies of the burning Lake laid Hold of them ; when the fiery Dragon was ready to devour them, and the old Serpent going to swallow up
their

their Souls: Behold, thy Son appears from Heaven, frights the Powers of Darkneſs, and all immediately fall down before him, and tremble.

II.

Ah! My deareſt Jeſu! Meekeſt of Kings, and fairer than all the Children of Men, I behold thee reigning and hanging on the Croſs! Reigning; for in Deſpight of all the Reproaches of thine Enemies, thou waſt ſtill the everlaſting King, and Saints and Angels bow'd to thee; when thy Body was torn, bruis'd, and wounded on the Tree, their Reproaches could not dethrone thee, their virulent Tongues could not make thee leſs than thou wert. Theſe impotent Wretches might bark at the Sun, but could not eclipse his Glory. Thou couldſt have deſtroy'd their Tongues, but wouldſt not; and it was a royal Act not to puniſh them, when thou haſt the greateſt Provocations. O my Lord! I ſee thee blotting out the Hand-Writing which was againſt me. How red were the Characters: How bloody were the Lines! Yet thy Blood makes them as white as Snow.

III.

O my Lord! I hear thy Words ſharper than any two-edged Sword, and piercing to the dividing aſunder of the Bones and Marrow: I heard thy Complaints, which broke the Rocks, and ſhook the Earth, and ſhall not my Heart be mov'd at them?

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22 *The Fire of the Altar.*

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For

For thee, the Son of God, to cry out, *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death!* Who can hear this? Who can think of it, and not stand confounded! For Omnipotence to sink thus! For infinite Perfection to faint thus! For him that sat on the Circle of the Earth, and before whom all Nations were as Grass-hoppers; for him thus to swoon, thus to weep, thus to mourn! What could be the Reason? O thou Prince of Peace! For the Iniquity of thy People thou wast struck; for the Sins of the World thou didst suffer Banishment, and wast used as if thou hadst not been anointed with Oil, or been guilty of the Crimes thy Foes accused thee of. The Snares of Death did encompass thee, thy Friends forsook thee, and thy Heritage, like a Lion out of the Wood, did roar against thee. O my Bowels, be ye troubled at this Remembrance! O my flinty Heart, canst thou see thy Lord, as it were, crucify'd before thine Eyes, and not break out into Floods of Tears! O Jesus! Thou cryest to thy Father, and he hears thee not! He seems to be cruel to his Son, and deaf to thy Lamentations! The Windows of Heaven seem to be shut, and a Veil to be drawn over all the Joys, and Comforts, and Consolations, that formerly water'd and enrich'd thy Soul! See how dry, and barren, and burnt up, this precious Soul appears. No Showers from Above

bove come down, no Sun shines upon it; the Stars of Heaven with-hold their Influence, and scarce an Angel will stir to thy Assistance. O thou who art all glorious within, and art thy self the Glory of the Universe! Were my Sins laid in a Balance, they would weigh heavier than the Sand on the Sea-shore; and then what need I wonder that thou cryest so loud under the heavy Load? For the Arrows of the Lord stick in thee, and his Hand presses thee sore.

IV.

O blessed *Nazarite*! Whiter than Snow, brighter than the Sky, purer than the Sun: How is thy Face disfigur'd with Grief! How do thine Eyes languish! How dismal dost thou appear! Is this the Face that was the Perfection of Beauty? Is this the Face that was once the Desire of all Nations? Is this the Face which so many Prophets and righteous Men have desir'd to see? Is this the Face that *Abraham* long'd to behold, and the Patriarchs were ambitious to have a View of? Is this the Face admir'd by Angels, and dreaded by Devils? What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved? O thou fairest among Women! Is this the mighty Bridegroom of the Church, once transfigur'd on the holy Mount, whose Face did shine as the Sun, and his Raiment became white as the Light? Is this he whom God anointed with the Oil of Gladness

Gladness above his Fellows; whose Garments smell of Myrrh, Aloes, and Cassia? and cast such a Scent, that the Daughter of Tyre came with a Gift, and the Rich among the People entreated his Favour? How is he alter'd? How is his Countenance chang'd? How is the Gold become dim, and the fine Gold chang'd? Yet still thou art lovely to a Soul that sees farther than the Out-side. Still thou art a Cordial to fainting Spirits: Still thou art a Fountain of living Waters: Still thou art the Joy of the whole Earth, the Light of Heaven, and the Song of Sion. My Thoughts, O Lord, shall follow thee to the Cross: Methinks I see, how thou art going to die; thou lookest back on thine Enemies, and, notwithstanding all their Affronts, offerest them Mercy. O incomprehensible Goodness! Even then, when thou art lifted up to the infamous Tree, thou drawest and invitest all Men to thee, thou preacheest on the Cross, and thy very Wounds are Sermons to the Children of Men; and thy Blood trickling down, is an Exhortation to Repentance. Surely it is good for me to adhere unto thee, and to count it Death to be separated from thee.

V.

O whither shall I go but to thee, who hast the Words of eternal Life? Thou art my Sun, by thee I shall be enlighten'd, by thee my Soul shall be warm'd; O, how

com-

comfortable are thy Beams! What a Progress must that Soul make, on which thou shinest, and darrest thy glorious Rays! Thou art that lofty Cedar, whose Boughs overspread the believing World.

VI.

Under the Shadow of that Tree will I rest: It is for the healing of the Nations. I will be glad in the Lord, and rejoyce in my bleeding Jesus. While the World despises, I will honour thee; while great Men pass by and regard thee not, I, that am poor and needy, will wait to be refresh'd by thee!

VII.

Go, ye Fools! Be enamour'd with your Trifles, admire your Butterflies, doat on your sensual Pleasures: Here is one that looks charming in his Tears, lovely in his Blood, amiable in his Wounds, and is more beautiful in the Midst of all his Distresses, than the brightest Virgin's Face, adorn'd with all the glittering Treasures of the *East*.

VII.

O my Strength! by thee I desire to be comforted and supported. O, anoint my Eyes with thy Sovereign Eye-salve, and I shall see and live. O, that the Clouds, which dwell on my Understanding, were dispers'd, that I might look upon thee stedfastly! O, then thou would'st appear more lovely to me on the Cross, than Cræ-
Jus

Jesus in his Throne, or *Solomon* in all his Glory! God forbid that I should glory in any Thing, save in the Cross of Christ. In this lie hid vast Treasures of Sweetness! O, my *Jesus*! make me conformable to thy Death, and give me Leave to carry thy Marks in my Body: Let me be crucify'd with thee, and let Christ for ever live in me.

IX.

Canst thou live in a Soul that hath abus'd thy Mercy, slighted thy Patience, and so often baffled the Stratagems of thy Compassion? I believe, Lord! O help my Unbelief. Thou camest to call, not the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance, O then my Husband will Love me, my Redeemer will come and live with me; for my Repentings are kindled: I hate the Sins that have defil'd my Soul! Away, ye Swine! here Devils must not come. I am to receive my Bridegroom into my Heart. Come, Lord *Jesus*, come quickly! Thou art the welcomest Guest I know! How happy shall I be, if thou wilt lodge in this earthly Tabernacle: Happier, than if all the Angels of Heaven took up their Habitation here!

X.

O ye besotted *Jews*, what makes you run so fast to kill the Lord of Life? Ye cannot live without him, and what evil Spirit doth possess you to kill and murder the

ther him? Can you think of his Miracles, and do so? Can you reflect upon his Doctrine, and attempt such Villanies? Can you remember how he taught you in the Temple, even to Astonishment, and venture on such Proceedings? Can you call to mind how he hath purg'd your Country of Devils, and your Sick of their Diseases, and suffer the Devil to enter into you.

XI.

O dreadful Spectacle! O that my Head were Water! What shall I do to be clean? O thou that art purer than the Lillies, purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and my Filthiness shall not be seen! O, bathe me in the Fountain open'd for the House of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, and I shall look fairer than the Children which feed on the Meat of the King of *Babylon's* Table. O my God, I thirst for thee, as dry Land after Water. My Soul flies and flutters about, like *Noah's* Dove, and can find no Rest 'till it gets into the Ark. *Great Gate of Mercy*, open to me; hide me from the Wrath of an offended God, and make a Covenant of Peace with me. Ah! Who would not love thee, that hears thee pray for thy greatest Enemies!

XII.

O lovely Bridegroom of my Soul! wound my Heart, that it may be sick of Love. How kind art thou, even to thy most hard-hearted Foes! What a Motive is this to

D

love

love thee! What needest thou care what becomes of stubborn Sinners! Why shouldst thou trouble thy self about Wretches, that will have none of thee; that will have their Dirt, and Dung, and Trash, and Hums, and prefer those Trifles before Heaven, and a Sea of Glory? Thou canst live without the Society of Men; at least thou needst not such Company; yet thou long'st for their Pardon and Happiness, as if they had been thy greatest Friends. Was ever Goodness like this! O that my Thoughts and Contemplations might be always busy about this Love! This is no vulgar Love, the Love of *David* to *Jonathan*; the Love of *Jacob* to *Rachel*; the Love of Brethren, Sisters, Friends, will bear no Resemblance here! *Moses* his Love to the *Israelites*, for whose Sake, and so they might but continue in God's Favour, he was content to be blotted out of God's Book; and *St. Paul's* Wish to be even accurs'd of Christ, for his Kinsmen of the *Jewish* Nation: These Demonstrations of thy Love come somewhat nearer; but still thy Love, my dearest Lord, surpasses all these, as the Light of the Sun doth that of the Moon, and the lesser Stars. They borrow'd their Love from thine, and lighted their Candle by thy brighter Fire; that which was Excess of Love in them, was but a Spark of that Charity, which overspread thy larger Soul.

XIII. They

XIII.

They did but wish to die for the People;
Thou didst actually expire for their Good.
Their Love was confin'd to a single Nation;
thine extended to the whole World: These
Men were still their Friends, that they
wish'd to be miserable for; but those thou
sufferedst for, were thine Enemies: Their
Love had great Defects mingled with it;
but thine was pure and spotless: Theirs had
Clouds and Mists to darken it; thine was
all Light and Glory: Theirs was a sudden
Transport, which might not last many
Days; but thine was constant to a Mira-
cle, and those whom thou lovedst, thou
lovedst unto the End.

XIV.

Great Emperor of Souls! Thou hang-
edst betwixt Thieves, and not without
Reason; for thou steal'st the Heart away.
What Heart can see thy Beauty, and for-
bear being enamour'd with it? Thou dost
ravish my Soul with thine Eyes of Pity.
To see thee cast a favourable Look on such
a Monster as I am; who can forbear fal-
ling in Love with so much Clemency? I
am a Captive in this World. The Law
of my Members make me captive to the
Law of Sin: O, take me by Force from
that Prison! O, set me as a Seal upon thy
Heart; rule thou in my Members, erect
a Trophy over my Head, and rejoice in
conquering me. O let me be content to

undergo the Cross, and Reproach with thee, that thou may'st remember me now thou art in thy Kingdom! O remember me with the Favour thou bearest unto thy People!

XV.

O my Jesus! who can hear thee cry, *I thirst*, and not with for Rivers of Tears? What can'st thou thirst for, but the Salvation of Mankind? Thou camest for that Purpose from Heaven; left'st those brighter Mansions to invite poor Sinners to the mighty Barquet there. For this thou didst travel up and down, and enduredst Cold, and Hunger, and Weariness; for this thou wroughtest Miracles; for this thou didst intreat, rebuke, preach the Word in Season and out of Season; for this thou could'st be content to want a Place where to lay thy Head; for this thou taughtest daily in the Temple; sometimes on the Mount, sometimes in a Ship, sometimes in a Desert; for this thy Soul did long; for this thou sufferedst; for this thou wast buffeted, beaten, bruised, and wounded; even because thou wouldst not give over calling poor deluded Sinners to a Sense of their Duty; for this thou thirstedst here: The rude Multitude fancies, it was either Water or some Cordial thou wishedst for: They measur'd thy Condition by their own sensual Appetite: But they were purer Desires that glow'd in thy Breast. It is Water indeed thou thirstedst for; but such Water as Da-

vid

vid made his Bed to swim in. The Tears of a penitent Soul are the Wine thou longest for; they are the Drink the Son of God thirsts after. Weep, weep, mine Eyes, that the Lord Jesus may drink, and be satisfy'd! O Lord, I have given thee Gall to drink, I have offer'd thee the Cup of Trembling and Astonishment. Ah, bitter! Ah, wretched Drink! worse than the foulest Ditch-water! Drink, my dearest Lord, *Drink of the Brook by the Way.* Drink of these Tears: Drink of this holy Water I do shed. O, it is the Sweat of a griev'd Soul, of a Soul weary of Sin, and heavy laden with the Sense of it! My Heart melts, my Soul dissolves at the Thoughts of my Follies. Drink up this Heart of mine, and let it mingle with thy Bowels of Mercy. Here, Lord, accept of the Vows I offer thee! Behold and visit this Vine, which thine own Right-hand hath planted. Shine upon it, Lord, let it bring forth pleasant Grapes, no more Grapes of the Vine of Sodom, but Grapes sweet, and which may cheer the Heart of God and Man.

XVI.

The Drink-Offerings I bring to thee, are insatiable Desires after thee, the most fervent Breathings of my Heart, after thy Grace and Mercy. O, receive them graciously, and love me freely. I bring no
D 3 Rivers

34 *The Fire of the Altar.*

Rivers of Oil, no Rams, no Bullocks with Horns and Hoofs. Thou desirest not Sacrifice, else I would give it thee; thou delight'st not in Burnt-Offerings: Thou wilt take no Bullock out of my House, nor He-Goats out of my Folds; for every Beast of the Forest is thine, and so is the Cattle upon a thousand Hills. Thou know'st all the Fowls of the Mountains, and the wild Beasts of the Field are thine: If thou wert hungry, thou wouldst not tell me; for the World is thine, and the Fulness thereof. Thou wilt not eat the Flesh of Bulls, nor drink the Blood of Goats; but the Offerings thou expectest, are Thanksgivings, and paying my humble Vows to thy Divine Majesty, and calling upon thee in the Day of Trouble. O my God, my Soul fainteth for thee! When shall I come to appear before thee? My Soul is cast down within me; when wilt thou comfort me; I long for thy Salvation: I hunger and thirst after Righteousness: I see Beauty and Splendor, and Excellency in it, and would fain be cloath'd with that Ornament. Thou deserveest my strongest Desires, my most vigorous Breathings, my most lively Pantings after thee. Not to long after thee, is to be a Stranger to real Bliss; not to follow hard after thee, is to be ignorant of thy Riches, and the Plenty of thy House. But what do I talk of Desires of a single Heart? Would to God that all

Man

Mankind might offer unto thee their reasonable Service, thou deserv'st it, and deserv'st all the Love of Angels too. But thou desir'st nothing so much as the Hearts of the Children of Men. The Angels are happy already, only Mankind lies ingulf'd in Misery; and so great is thy Charity, that, having taken their Nature upon thee, thou would'st willingly make them equal with Angels.

XVII.

Great Darling of the holy Trinity, what Hast thou make to die!

How dost thou run to redeem the Sons of Men! Nothing can hold thee, nothing can restrain thee; not thy own Greatness, not thy Majesty, not thy being the Son of God, not Love to thy own Preservation. Thou lovedst me better than thy self. How didst thou fly to my Deliverance! How thou leap'st in to prevent my Hurt! No Devils can fright thee, no Danger terrify thee, no Pain discourage thee, no Anguish make thee afraid. Thou long'st 'till the great Work be done. The other Malefactors, that were crucify'd with thee, (What Honour had these Wretches, and yet were not sensible of it! One, at last, opens his Eyes, and sees it, and stands amaz'd: These) held out longer on the Gibbet, but thou bidst Death come away, and seize thy Life! It's a Pleasure to thee to die. O, surprising Mercy! Other Men seek to escape
Death

Death as long as they can ; they run away from the Sight of the Monster : If they do but see the Shadow of it, they tremble, and to them Death is truly a King of Terrors. Thou goest out to meet it, as that which must put an End to thy Sufferings and my Misery, It's Death to thee not to die. Thou chidest it for staying. Thou hast a Baptism to be baptiz'd with, and, oh ! what wouldst thou, that it were accomplish'd !

XVIII.

Ah, my Lord ! I see thy dying Lips, from which dropt Speeches sweeter than Honey and the Honey-comb. Death is going to close them up, yet, O vouchsafe me a Look that may refresh my Soul. And now the Glory is departed from *Israel* : The Saviour of the World gives up the Ghost ! O, let me die with thee ! O, draw me after thee, and I shall live ! I wonder not, that the Graves open at thy Death, and the Rocks rend, and the Sun hides his Face ; but I wonder the whole Earth did not dissolve, and Nature it self did not run into its primitive Chaos and Confusion.

XIX.

O, my crucify'd Master ! How ill art thou rewarded for thy Kindness ? Thou wast Eyes to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame ; thou wast a Father to the Poor, and a Staff to the Aged ; thou didst cause the Widows Heart to sing for Joy ; thou didst deliver the Poor that cry'd, the Fatherless,
and

and him that had no Helper. Unto thee Men gave Ear, and waited, and kept Silence at thy Counsel; after thy Words they speak not again, and thy Speech dropp'd upon them: The Naked deck'd themselves with the Wooll of thy Sheep, and thy Door was open'd to the weary Traveller. But now, they that are younger than thee, have thee in Derision; and they that were Children of Fools, Children of base Men, Men viler than the Earth, gape upon thee. Thou art their Song, and art become their By-Word. They abhor thee, and flee far from thee, and spare not to spit in thy Face. They mar thy Path, they set forward thy Calamity. Terrors are turn'd upon thee; they pursue thy Soul as the Wind, and thy Welfare passes away as a Cloud.

XX.

O infinite Patience! Yet these Sinners are offer'd Salvation by him whom they abus'd thus. Salvation! What do I hear! O then there is Hopes for me, for I have been one of thy Enemies! I have mock'd thee by my Sins; I have derided thy Sufferings, by my Contempt of thy Laws; I have scorn'd thee, by preferring my own Will before thine; I have spit upon thee, by my filthy Communications; I have abus'd thee, by sheltering my Sins under thy Cross; I have dishonour'd thee by my Life, disgrac'd thee by my Carelessness,
buffeted

buffeted thee by my Impatience, affronted thee by my Pride, made light of thy Power and Goodness by my Mistrust of thy Providence, undervalued thy Love by my Affection to Vanity; and yet thou stretchest forth thine Arms to lay Hold on me, art loth to see me perish, unwilling to see me undone, and proclaim'st Mercy to a forlorn Wretch! Blessed News! O King of Kings, thou cryest, *It is fulfilled*; the Work is done, the vast Work of Redemption; now the Father's Anger is broke; now the Flood-Gates of Indignation are shut; now Heaven stands open; now thy Father's Bosom is offer'd to all that thirst after thee.

XXI.

Hear this, all ye Prisoners! Listen to this Message, ye guilty Souls! Come all that are laden with a Sense of Sin! Open the Door! Throw off your Chains! Run to this Rock! Make Haste to this Fountain! Kiss this Son! Make much of this Light! Embrace this Mercy! Do you dispute the Thing? Do you question whether you shall do it or no? Is it possible you can stand out? Is it possible you can demur upon it? Is it possible your Hearts do not turn within you? Can you refuse your Cordial? Neglect the Medicine that must recover you? Slight the Remedy that must fetch you to Life again? O Jesu! Thou hast done all Things

Things well! Thou hast made the Blind to see, and the Dumb to speak, and the Deaf to hear. O, open thou my Lips, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise. Open thou mine Ears, and let me hear thy loving Kindness betimes in the Morning. O, open thou mine Eyes, and I shall see how sweet and gracious thou art.

XXII.

O, my Life! thou dyedst; and, dying, fulfilledst thy Father's Will; for indeed it was fit that one Man should die for the People, and that the whole Nation perish not. Ah! What would Mankind have done, if thou hadst not paid the Ransom? Whither must they have fled for Refuge, if thou hadst not given thy self a Sacrifice? They must have wander'd about in Caves and Dens, destitute, tormented, afflicted, disconsolate; liv'd in perpetual Fear of Death, and the dreadful Consequences of it. Death must have been for ever a King of Terrors to them: If they had but look'd upon that Hell that Death would have open'd into, how could they have but liv'd in perpetual Horror! There would have been no Hope of Mercy, no Probability of Bliss; their Souls would have been in eternal Confusion, always doubting, always afraid, always upon the Rack. O my Jesu, Thou, through Death hath deliver'd

ver'd them, who through Fear of Death were all their Life-time subject to Bondage! Thou hast knock'd off their Shackles, loos'd their Bonds, free'd their Souls, set their Spirits at Liberty! I feel the Power of thy Death. My Heart takes Courage; O let me rise with thee to eternal Life! O let me not lye in the Mire, but set my Feet upon a Rock, and establish my Goings. I have gone astray like a lost Sheep, O seek thy Servant, that I may not forget thy Commandments.

XXIII.

Thou art the Bread which came down from Heaven, and with the Bread in the Eucharist, thou offerest me all the Benefits of thy Death and Passion; such a Feast hast thou prepar'd for me! Such a Table hast thou spread for me! My Soul is invited to sup with the Lamb that was slain! What an Honour is this! What a Condescension is it! In this Sacrament thou erectest a Banner for me, bidst me sit under thy Vine, and strengthen my self with the Fruit that drops from it. Were all the Fishes of the Sea, and all the Fowls of the Air, and all the Beasts of the Field, dress'd for my Entertainment, it would not be so much as this plain but heavenly Diet is! Tell not me of *Belshazzar's* Banquet, nor of *Abasuerus's* Feast, nor of the Rich Man's curious Dishes, they are all Scraps and Offal to this Entertainment.

tainment. Here my blessed Redeemer courts my Soul; here he makes Love to a miserable Sinner; here he presents me with the Riches of his Merits: No *African* Gold, no *Eastern* Pearls, no *Indian* Stones, are to be compar'd with these. Here the Lord of Glory offers to marry me, to unite me to him, to make an everlasting Covenant with me, promises to endow me with all his Goods, puts a Ring on my Finger, and bids me lie in his Bosom. This is Honour, this is Glory, this is Preferment, which no Royal Courts can give, no *Solomon* can afford, no Emperor grant, no Monarch confer, no King bestow. This is the mighty Wedding-Feast, at which the blessed Angels wait: How can they forbear being there, where their Master is President and Director of the Banquet: This puts me in Mind of all the admirable Things thou hast done for me; in this Bread are contracted all the Dainties and Delicacies imaginable.

XXIV.

O wonderful Love, that wast not content to be known to me, but art willing to give thy self for Food to me! What Pains dost thou take to melt my stubborn Heart! Thou art willing to live in me: Thou art willing to be one with me, that I may not warp from thee. Thou art willing to be my Meat and Drink; not only my King

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to protect me, not only my Father to tender me, not only my Master to take care of me, not only my Saviour to snatch me out of the burning Lake, not only my Mediator to secure me against Heaven's Vengeance, but my Dyet too: Thou see'st my Soul wants Meat proper for her Nature: Alas! the World cannot be that Meat: That's an heterogeneous Thing: As well may Angels feed on Hay or Grass, as my Soul on Things that profit not. That which my Soul must feed on, must be something spiritual. Thou, O Jesu! art that great spiritual Object my Soul must fix on, nothing else will content it; and when my Thoughts contemplate thee, when my Soul meditates of thy Charity, when my Affections love thee, when my Desires long for thee, when my Will submits to thy easy Yoke, when all my Faculties delight in thee, when thou appearest lovely, and charming, and amiable to my Mind, then, then, my Soul hath its proper Food; then it's like to live, then it's in a Way to thrive, then it prospers, then it grows, then it gets a chearful Look, then the Angels visit it; the World perfectly sowers it, sensual Pleasures ruin it, carnal Satisfaction make it meagre. Thou, O Lord, thou alone canst make it flourish like the Palm-Tree, and satisfy it with the Rivers of thy Pleasure,

XXV.

O! my Lord, how sweet it is to suck Honey out of this Rock! Thy Bread strengthens to a Miracle, and thy Blood makes Souls drunk. It is as the Dew of *Hermion*, and as the Dew that descends on the Mountains of *Zion*; for there the Lord commanded the Blessing, even Life for evermore. O, my God, I care not for *Abanah* and *Pharpar* now, nor for the Rivers of *Damascus*. I will stand under thy Cross and open my Mouth. O, do thou fill it! while others go to rejoyce in their Corn, and Wine, and Oil, I will go to the Supper of the Lamb. Here, Lord, here is my Heart, ready to receive the heavenly Food thou offer'st me. Awake, thou eternal Spirit, awake, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices may flow out! O let this Manna satisfy my Taste, that I may forget the Flesh-Pots of *Egypt*. Behold, Lord, here I make a Vow, that if thou wilt give me this Bread to eat, which endures to everlasting Life, thou shalt be my God, I will serve no other Gods but thee, thou shalt command my Heart, my Desires, and my Affections; and without thee, no Passion shall lift up its Hand or Foot in all the Land of *Goshen*: I will set thee over all that I have, and all shall be at thy Dispose.

Christ. I feel my Heart warm'd with this Consideration. I will now turn aside, and see this great Sight, who it is that hangs upon the Cross, and bleeds for my Sins. O! it is the Son of God; he that was in the Form of God, and thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant, and became obedient to the Death of the Cross, that I might be made the Righteousness of God through him.





C H A P. II.

*Of the Particulars to be observ'd before
we come to the Lord's Table.*

Conscience.

BUT is there nothing else to be done by
Way of Preparation for this blessed
Sacrament?

I.

Christ. O yes! For I must first retire
sometimes, and celebrate, and admire the
Love of God to me in Christ Jesus, in some
such Reflections as these:

Be astonish'd, ye Heavens, stand amaz'd,
ye Choirs of Angels, at the Condescension
of my God. I have betray'd him to the
Philistines; yet he loves the miserable
Wretch, and so loves him, that he gives
his Son to redeem him.

O God, What dost thou see in me? no-
thing but Misery, nothing but Rags, no-
thing but Poverty, and yet thou lov'st
me?

46 *The Fire of the Altar.*

I am but Dust and Ashes, and will God vouchsafe a gracious Look to so mean an Object? O sovereign Being! Didst thou ever behold a viler Creature than I am? And wilt thou go out of the common Road of Love, and spread thy Garments over me, and offer me thy Friendship?

O Love! which *Cherubims* admire, and *Seraphims* adore! It passes Understanding; it goes beyond my Cognizance; it confounds my Reason. I admire the Love of a Prince to a Subject; but that will bear no Resemblance to this Love!

God might have triumph'd in my Groans, glorify'd his Justice by my Stripes; but Pity abounds in him, it hath no Banks, it flows at large, it's extended even to the most abject Creature as I am.

O Love! How humble art thou! How violent art thou! Thou break'st through all the Clouds of Heaven to come down. Thou foregoest the Rules of Greatness and Majesty, to shew thy Glory. That the eternal Son of God should take Flesh upon him, and die to give Life to the World! Oh, where can I parallel this Love!

I will sing of Love, I will speak of Love, I will think of Love, my very Dreams, were it possible, should be employ'd about it. O, that I could write Panegyricks of it! Were not my Tongue confin'd, it should do nothing else but talk of Love.

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Here is Love, to which all natural Sympathies must vail. I see no End thereof; the farther I go in the Search, the more I lose my self: But how should a Creature find out the End of that which is infinite?

Where shall I find out the Spring of this mighty Stream? Where shall I find the Beginning of it? Alas! the Line of Reason is too short! There is no fathoming of this Depth? Who can search into the Recesses of Eternity? In the vast Abyss the Head of this great River lies; but who shall dive into it? It's enough that I am so happy as to be acquainted with it: It's enough that the Almighty hath reveal'd it unto Babes; even so, Father, it seem'd good in thy Sight. I can give no Reason of it. Thy Love, Lord, was the Cause of this Love; thy Love was the Motive! Nothing else could be any Enforcive. I am sensible thou art merciful, because thou wilt be merciful.

O, thou eternal Wisdom, whom the Lord possess'd in the Beginning of his Way, before his Works of old, who wast set up from everlasting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was; when there were no Depths, thou wast brought forth, when there were no Fountains abounding with Water, before the Mountains were settled, before the Hills, was thou brought forth, while as yet he had not made the Earth, nor the Fields, nor the highest Part of the
Dust

Dust of the World; thou wast there when he prepar'd the Heavens, when he set a Compass upon the Face of the Depth, when he establish'd the Clouds above, when he strengthen'd the Deep, when he gave to the Sea his Decree, that the Waters should not pass his Commandment: O thou who wast by him, as one brought up with him, who wast daily his Delight, rejoicing always before him, enlighten my Mind, that I may have clearer Apprehension of this Charity!

Arise, my Thoughts! Awake, up my Glory! See, O my Soul, how that Love smiles upon thee! See how bright, how clear, how charming it is! See how Devils tremble at it; see how they grin and fret, to think they must have no Share in it! See what glorious Beams it darts on penitent Sinners! See how it warms their Hearts! See how it follows them, how loth it is to leave them! See how it adjures them, and how importunate it is with them, to suffer themselves to be conquer'd by it.

II.

I must examine my self, not only what, and where, and when, and how, I have (especially of late) been acting against God, and affronted his Goodness, Mercy, and Patience; and what Sorrow, Grief, and Fear, these particular Offences have caus'd in me; but whether I am unfeignedly resolv'd to part with all these

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particular Sins, I am most prone and inclin'd to; whether my Heart and Purpose be fix'd to know the Will of God, and to do it; whether I do sincerely, and without Reservation, intend, for the future, to prefer God's Will before my Will, and his Favour before the Favour of Men; and whether I do in good Earnest design to forgo my Profit, Gain, or Interest, in the World, rather than to do any Thing willingly that is displeasing to God; whether I do truly prize the Love of God above all the Riches of this World, and see greater Beauty in that Holiness to which I am invited by this Love, than in all the Gaudies and Satisfaction of the World. And if I do, and my Conscience bears me Witness of it, I may chearfully go to the Lord's Table, and expect the Benefits that are offer'd there.

III.

If I have done any signal Wrong to my Neighbour, I must make him either Restitution or Satisfaction; at least there must be a willing Mind to do it, as soon as my present Circumstances will bear it: I must either restore to him what I have cheated or wrong'd him in, or have secretly and against his Will taken away from him; or, if I am not able to restore, make Confession of the Fault, and beg his Forgiveness; I must be reconcil'd to him, if I have offended him, or given him just Occasion to be angry;

angry; and if after that Attempt he will still keep his Anger, I have deliver'd my own Soul.

I must let my Neighbour know that I do as truly forgive him, as I hope to be forgiven of Christ Jesus; and am as ready to give, as my Neighbour to ask my Pardon.

I must remember how God hath entail'd his Pardon upon mine; and if I forgive not from my Heart, neither will my heavenly Father forgive my Trespases. If I have abus'd my Neighbour either in Words or Deeds, and he either hath receiv'd or is like to receive any Prejudice by it, I must not be asham'd to acknowledge my Error; but prefer a quiet Conscience before my Reputation in the World.

IV.

I must survey the bitter Sufferings of my blessed Saviour, as they are laid down and describ'd by the Evangelists. I must follow him into the Garden of *Gethsemane*, and go up with him to the Mount of *Olives*, and there behold how his Heart was troubled, and how the Fears of Death fell upon him; how his Soul was fill'd with Sorrow, and how his Life drew near unto the Grave; how he trod the Wine-press of God's Anger alone, and humbled himself before his Father; how, as *Man*, he begg'd that the Cup might pass from him, and yet, as *Mediator*, freely consented to his Father's Will; how Distress and Anguish came up-

The Fire of the Altar. 51

on him, and in the Midst of those Miseries the weary Disciples fell asleep; how he wept, and mourn'd, and sweat Drops of Blood; and how Hell open'd her Mouth upon him; how he bore our Grievs, and took the Chastisement of our Peace upon him; how he drank of the bitter Cup, and his Heart within him became as melting Wax; how he was led to *Annas*, and he to whom all the Angels in Heaven bow'd, stood before a sinful Man; how from *Annas* he was dragg'd to *Caiaphas*, and, like a Lamb, led to the Slaughter; how he was accus'd before *Pontius Pilate*, and there bespatter'd with all the ill Language that Men or Devils could invent; how he was set at nought by *Herod*, and in Scorn deck'd with a purple Robe; how from thence he return'd to *Pilate*, and thereupon was scourg'd, and crown'd with Thorns; how after this he bore his Cross, and was actually crucify'd; how he was made to drink Gall and Vinegar, and, at last, bow'd the Head and dy'd.

But then, I must not only barely survey these Sufferings, but reflect, at the same Time, upon my Sins that procur'd them; and accuse, not only my grosser Sins, if I have been guilty of any, but my lesser Errors, of using the Son of God so barbarously: I must not reflect upon his bloody Sweat, without thinking of my proud Thoughts, and Speeches, and Actions, that pull'd it
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on him; nor upon his Wounds, without beating my Breast for my Envy, and Malice, and revengeful Desires, that caus'd 'em; nor upon the Crown of Thorns, without detesting my Intemperance, and sinister Designs in doing Good, and Affectation of Vain-glory, that set it on his Head; nor on the Nails that tore his Flesh, without taking a View of my Pettishness, and Peevishness, and Impatience, which struck them in; nor upon the Spear that open'd his Side, without entertaining some dismal Thoughts of my Neglect of Meditation, and Prayer, and Fervency of Spirit, and pious Discourses, and bearing of Injuries, and holy, heavenly Thoughts; nor upon his Tears, without looking stern upon my flight and superficial Performances: For all these help'd towards his Death and Agonies.

V.

I must shew my Willingness to imitate Christ Jesus, by doing some good Work, if Health and Strength do give me Leave. This must be the First-Fruits of my future treading in his Steps, and will make my coming to the Holy Sacrament more comfortable. I must, in this, imitate the Woman that pour'd out the Ointment on Christ's Head, before his Sufferings began; and Christ himself who wash'd his Disciples Feet before he refresh'd their Souls with the Holy Sacrament. I must either

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free some Prisoner, if it lie in my Power, to testify my Acknowledgment of the Mercy Christ shew'd me, in freeing me from the Bondage of the Devil; or *relieve some poor Family*, to express my Sense of Christ's relieving my Soul in the greatest Strait, or, *impart some good Counsel to a wicked and careless Neighbour*, to shew how kind Christ was, in visiting me with his Admonitions; or *visit some sick Persons that are under great Distress*, and comfort them, or help them, or give them, or procure them, some Physick that may do them Good, if they be needy, to shew how sensible I am of Christ's being my Physician: Or *forgive some small Debt* a poor Man owes me, to shew how I rejoice at Christ's forgiving me ten thousand Talents; or *visit a Man that hates me*, and *behave my self most courteously to him*, to see whether his Heart will melt, and come to a better Temper, thereby to express my Sense of Christ's Love to me, that has been his Enemy; or *give a good Book to one that hath no Money to buy one*, to shew my Sense of Christ's feeding me with the Word of Life; or *deny my self in a lawful Recreation*, or lawful Ornament, or lawful Meal, to shew I am sensible how Christ hath deny'd himself for my Sake; or *pray earnestly for the Conversion of a Person I have no Acquaintance with*, and whom I hear to be

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very vicious, to express my Sense of Christ's Care of my Salvation.

VI.

I must frequently pray, that God would give me a Heart to breathe and pant after him, and, particularly, a Heart to esteem and prize his Love, manifested in his Sacrament, above all the Pleasures of this World: That he would give me a Faith active and vigorous, and which may press through all Impediments, and purify my Heart and Life, and forget what is behind it: That he would give me a contrite Spirit, and Grace to tremble at his Word and Threatnings: That he would give me Courage to undervalue and despise the World, and the Glories and Vanities of it: That he would give me a burning Zeal to his Glory, a transcendent Love to his Name, and Ways, and Ordinances: That he would make me sincere in Devotion, in Prayer, and in all good Works, and banish from me all sinister and worldly Ends and Designs in holy Performances: That he would give me, first, Resolution to imitate the Saints of Old, and the best Examples at this Day, and to stop my Ears against all the Suggestions of Flesh and Blood to the contrary: That he would give me a Mind, which may delight in contemplating the divine Goodness and Perfection, and would teach me the great Art of Self-Resignation, of trust-
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ing him with my Soul and Body, and of relying entirely upon his Providence.

VII.

I must resolve (and unfeignedly upon my bended Knees, or in a very solemn Manner) to watch and strive, for the Future, against those particular Sins, and Errors, and sinful Inclinations I am most inclin'd to; if I have neglected such a Self-denial, to neglect it no more; if I have been guilty of such Acts of Pride, Envy, and Ill-nature, to be guilty of 'em no more; if I have been careless and slovenly in my Prayers, to be so no more; if I have pleas'd my self with vain Thoughts, to please my self with them no more; if I have delighted in fine Cloaths, to delight in them no more; if I have been false to my Vows and Promises, to be false to them no more; if I have made nothing of ill Names and ill Language, to dread it like Poison for the future: I must resolve to mortify such a Habit of Sin with Rigours, with being unkind to my Flesh, with Fasting, and with Mulcts of Money: If I commit but a single Act of Sin, I must resolve to use the proper Means to subdue such a Corruption; I must resolve to avoid that Company where I am and have been apt to yield to a certain Sin; I must resolve to spend my Time better; and if I have spent too much of it in Dressing, in Pleasure, in Cards and Dice,

Ec. to do so no more; whatever Disgrace, Disrespect, or Frowns, I may meet with from the World, or from mine Acquaintance; and if I have been careless of meditating and being serious on the Lord's Day, to make a better Improvement of that Day. And I must so resolve, as to think my self concern'd to fulfil and perform my solemn Resolution, unto which I have call'd God as a Witness.

VIII.

I must watch against all Things that would discompose and disorder my Mind, put me into a Rage or Passion, and make me peevish and discontented, and consequently unfit for the worthy receiving of this Sacrament. I must labour to preserve a Calmness and Serenity of Mind; and that neither Multitude of worldly Business do distract me, nor Injuries past and gone discompose me, or put me into impatient Thoughts and Expressions, nor present Disappointments to rob me of my Quiet. I must watch against Impediments, that would tempt me to delay my coming to this Table, and take heed I do not yield to Temptations, that would make me neglect the Opportunity put into my Hand of making my Peace with God and mine own Conscience. I must reject Suggestions of this Nature, and regard more the necessary Concerns of the Soul, than Things that, at the best, are but sensual Satisfaction.

CHAP.



CHAP. III.

*Of the Particulars to be observ'd when
we are at the Lord's Table..*

Conscience.

AND what must thy Thoughts be,
and what Frame must thy Heart
be in, when thou comest to the Holy Ta-
ble of the Lord?

Christ. I must,

I.

Employ my Soul in holy Ejaculations,
such as these:

O! Who will give me to drink of the
Water of the Well of *Bethlehem*! Where-
with shall I come before the Lord! How
shall I bow my self before the most High!
Shall I come before him with Burnt-Offer-
ings, with Calves of a Year old?

O my Lord! Thou hast shew'd me what
is good; and what dost thou require of

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me,

me, but to do justly, to shew Mercy, and to walk humbly with my God.

O my God! I bring an humble Heart, a Soul that desires to lie low before thee; a Soul that longs to be clean, and to be wash'd in the Blood of the Lamb; a Soul weary of Sin, that sees no Comfort, no Satisfaction, no Content in Things below, but beholds afar off the Treasures of Consolation that lie hid in Christ Jesus.

These are Things to be desir'd: These are Mercies worth having: These enrich bankrupt Souls: With these Pardon is purchas'd, and Heaven is procur'd. O give me a Title to them! Thou that art the true Morning-Star, O shine upon me! O enlighten me! O let me feel thy comfortable Beams! These burn not, these scorch not; but sanctify, and polish, and adorn.

I have seen an End of all Perfection; but thy Merits are exceeding broad; they enlarge Heaven, subdue Death, conquer Hell, expel Devils, and make God my Friend.

How have I doated on the Vanities of this World! they are Bubbles all! But thou, sweet Jesu, art perfect Beauty, a Fountain of Joy, which never wants Water, never dries up, never fails, and never dies.

How much better is it to be here in the Courts of the Lord, than in the Tents of the

The Fire of the Altar. 59

the proudest Monarchs! One Day here is better than a thousand elsewhere.

Here God bows to poor Sinners! Here infinite Majesty converses with Dust and Ashes! Here the King of Heaven is not ashamed to call such poor Worms, as we are, Brethren.

How different are the Ways of God from the Ways of Men! They shun a *Lazarus*, and a Beggar; God receives them; and the Soul that's sensible of her Poverty, and begs to be enrich'd, is refresh'd by him, and invited into his Bosom.

How lovely art thou, my great Redeemer! How amiable! How kind! How beautiful! Therefore do the Virgins love thee.

Could there be greater Love, than to spill thy Blood for me? Could there be greater Charity, than to die for me? What Miracles of Mercy are these?

I come to beg an Alms at thine Hands; it's too great a Gift for me to ask, but not too great for thee to give; for it is thy self I beg.

O warm my Heart! Touch it with a Coal from the Altar! O kindle holy Fire in my Breast! Burn up the Dross and Tin there, and let nothing but pure Gold remain; let Love prevail: O change my Heart into fervent Love, and turn all my Faculties into Charity!

II.

I must join with the Congregation in their Prayers; I must put my Perfumes into that common Censer, that the holy Smoak may go up with join'd Force to the Throne of Mercy.

I must not come behind my Fellow-Members in Zeal and Earnestness.

They pray for the Prosperity of the universal Church, that God would guide her by his holy Spirit; so must I.

They pray for all christian Kings and Princes, that they may promote the Glory of God, and the Church's Welfare; so must I.

They pray for the Ministers of God's holy Word, that they may be found in the Faith, and Patterns of Holiness; so must I.

They pray for all distress'd Members of Christ, that the Consolations of Christ may abound in them; so must I.

They prostrate themselves in holy Confessions of their Sins, and pray for Remission, and Pardon, and Sanctification; so must I.

They pray to be made Partakers of the Benefits of Christ's Body and Blood; so must I.

III.

I must shew my Compassion to the Poor, by contributing to their Necessities, if I am able.

I must

The Fire of the Altar. 61

I must remember how poor, how wretched, how naked, how miserable I was, when the Son of God first took Pity on me, being yet in the Loins of my Father *Adam*.

I must consider, that my self at this Instant am lying at the Pool of *Bethesda*, waiting for the Angel of the Covenant to come down and stir the Waters, that I may be heal'd.

I must look upon my self as a Person full of Sores and Sicknefs, and reflect, that I come to be cur'd, for God's Sake, by the great Physician of Souls.

From my self I must look down on the Poor, that want my Help; and as I would have my great Master have Compassion on me, so must I have Compassion on my Fellow-Servants.

IV.

I must at this Time resist all worldly Thoughts, and bid my Oxen and my Farms, and my domestick Affairs, stand aloof, like Lepers, that must not come near a Place so full of Majesty, and a Work so big with Wonders.

I must with *Mary* chuse the better Part, and look upon *Martha's* serving as unreasonable.

I must lay aside Contrivances how to make a Bargain with my Neighbour, and know no other Covenant, but what I am making with God in the Blood of Jesus.

I must

I must not think of Trade and Traffick, but remember it is for the Pearl of Price that I am trading now, and laying out my Strength and Labour.

I must not be disturb'd with a desperate Debt that's owing me; but remember the Debts I owe to God, and how I do expect that at this Time they should be struck out and cancell'd for ever.

I must not now torment my self about a Livelihood, when I come to get a Title to a Life of everlasting Glory.

I must not now think how to get Bread, and make Provision for my Family, but rather reflect with Joy, what large Provision the Almighty makes for my Soul; and what Care he takes to make me a Son of God, and Heir of Heaven, and Co-heir with Christ.

When sensual Thoughts fly through my Mind at this Time, I must continue to say to them, arise and depart, for here shall not be your Rest.

V.

I must now make some spiritual Reflections on the Breaking of the Bread, and upon pouring out of the holy Wine.

On the Breaking of the Bread.

Behold, O my Soul, thus was thy Blessed Saviour's Body broken; thus was his unspotted Flesh torn asunder. O my Sins,

The Fire of the Altar. 63

ye did this barbarous Act. The Jews were but the external Instruments, ye were the fatal Causes of that Torture. Had it not been for you, the Crown of Thorns had never wounded that sacred Head.

Break, my Heart, break; it is a dismal Sight! A broken Heart is a Sacrifice, which he, that was broke upon the Account of my Sins, will not despise.

Nay, he will comfort the humble Soul, and the contrite Spirit: He will pour Wine and Oil into its Wounds, supple it with Balm, heal it with his Death, and make it whole by his Agonies.

See here, O my Soul, the Bread which is broke, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? See how many broken Pieces are here, which all make but one Loaf. So thou, and thy Fellow-Believers, make one mystical Body, whereof the crucify'd Jesus is Head and Governor, who influences the Body by his Spirit, and from his Fulness dispenses Grace for Grace.

Rejoyce, O my Soul! For now the Waves and Billows of God's Wrath are laid, the Storm of Vengeance is hush'd, the Thunder is gone, the Clouds clear up, thy broken Saviour hath turn'd the Sound of the Trumpet of War into a still small Voice.

O break with him no more! O preserve that Friendship which was so dearly bought! A Friendship purchas'd by Blood
sure

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sure must never die. Thou art his Friend,
O do not become his Enemy again, for
fear he never be Friends with thee again.

On the pouring out of the holy Wine.

Thus, O my Soul, thus flow'd the pre-
cious Blood of the tormented Jesus! In
such Streams it issu'd from his wounded
Body: Thus was the costly Juice let out!
Thus the rich Veins empty'd themselves
of their Treasure, and all, that thou might'st
be clean.

And, O *Jerusalem!* Wilt not thou be clean!
When shall it once be? When God makes Use
of his own Blood to purify thee, O my
Soul, wilt thou wallow still in thy Dung
and Nastiness? This would be inexcusable.
Arise, wash thy self in this *Jordan*, and
thy Flesh shall come again, like unto
the Flesh of a little Child.

O my Soul! Had not this Blood been
shed, there had been no Remission of Sins.
From the shedding of this Blood date thy
Happiness. When God saw this Blood,
the Tide turn'd, and thy offended Father
look'd on thee with a merciful Face.

How sweet is this Blood! it nourishes
unto eternal Life.

How high the Value of it! it redeems
the whole World.

How wholesom! It expels all Sickneses.

What

What Pity was it, that the least Drop of it should fall upon the Ground! It was fit to be receiv'd by the Hands of Angels! but the Earth, on which sinful Men walk'd, was defil'd and curs'd; and therefore it must fall upon it, to take away the Curse Man's Sin had made it subject to.

O precious Blood! drop, drop upon my Soul: Let me feel thy Virtue! Drive out the Curse! Water this barren Ground, that hath brought forth Bryars and Thorns, and let it bring forth pleasant Fruit again.

VI.

When I receive the Holy Bread, my Mind must vent it-self in some such Breathings as these:

O my Lord, I do remember with Joy and Grief, that thy Body was crucify'd for me, the meanest of thy Servants. I remember it with Joy, because thy Love is wonderful. Oh how vehement, how violent was this Love! to love an Enemy, and by that Love to charm into Obedience! I remember it with Grief, because my Sins were thy Murderers. O my Lord, I will stand out against thy Offers of Grace no longer: Here take my Heart: I solemnly resolve to dedicate my self, and all I have, to thy Service.

Or,

O God! this sacred Bread puts me in Mind, how the Lamb of God was offer'd for me. Do I believe this, and shall not

G

my

my Soul make thee her highest and her chiefest Good? O my God, I take thee here, not only for my Saviour, but for my King and Master too. Come, holy Spirit, rule my Heart; for I will henceforward serve no other Gods, but the great *Jehovah* alone, who lov'd me, and gave himself for me.

Or,

O my Jesus! my Life! my Joy! my Comfort! Thou dyedst that I might live. I remember it, and adore thy Majesty in Misery. O make me thine, and as this Bread doth mingle with my Substance, so let thy Spirit mingle with my Soul, that the same Mind may be in me, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Or,

Look upon this Bread, O my Soul! it represents the bleeding Body of thy dearest Lord. Bleed, O my Heart! Give thyself up to him that groan'd for thee. It's done, O God; neither Death nor Life shall separate me from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my Lord.

VII.

When I receive the holy Wine, my Thoughts must still be at Work, and address themselves to God in Christ Jesus, some such Way as this.

Either,

O Jesu, I thankfully remember, that thy Blood was spilt for me; what am I?
and

and what is my Father's House, that thou hast brought me thus far? Thou hast lov'd me better than I have done my self! O my Lord, give me thy sweet, thy tender, thy free, thy humble Spirit, that I may be one with thee, and desire nothing on Earth besides thee.

Or,

O blessed Balsam of my wounded Heart! Welcome, thou sovereign Salve! How seasonable is this Medicine! I die, if thy Blood relieve me not! O wash me, and I shall be whiter than Snow! I have deserv'd to drink the Cup of Trembling and Astonishment, and thou hold'st out to me the Cup of Salvation. O my Soul, remember who it is that is so kind to thee! O esteem, adore, magnify, and love him for ever!

Or,

O thou blessed Shepherd of my Soul! How ought I to blush, when I think of thy Blood, which my Sins did spill! Thou hast turn'd my Darknes into Light, and my Treason into Antidote. Thou curest me by Contradictions, and the Blood my Sins have drawn from thy Flesh, is become the only Refuge I have in the Day of Wrath. O look upon thy own Blood, and hide me in thy Wounds. I know not how to prize thy Favour; O do thou teach me to do great Things for thee.

to deny thy self, to take up thy Cross, and to follow thee.

Or,

O my Lord! By thy Tears, and by thy Blood thou adjurest me this Day to imitate thee in thy Graces, in thy Meekness, in thy Patience, in thy Humility, in thy Charity, in thy Contempt of the World, and in thy heavenly Mindedness. My Heart is fix'd, O God! my Heart is fix'd, I will sing and give Praise. Thou shalt be my Pattern. Here, under thy Cross, I promise Obedience and Conformity to thy Graces. O do thou help me! O assist me! Uphold me with thy free Spirit; so shall I teach the Transgressors thy Way, and Sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Or,

Great Bishop of my Soul, who hast left the Ninety and Nine in the Wilderness, and art come to seek this straying Sheep; Behold, Lord, the Prodigal is coming Home again! Thou comest toward me bleeding, groaning, dying; thou comest to receive him that has forsaken thee, to draw him, after that he hath fled from thee, to kiss him that did scourge thee, to crown him that did prick thee, to embrace him that did crucify thee, to revive him that did kill thee, and to love him that did hate thee! O stupendious Mercy! Henceforward no Vain-glory, no worldly Pomp, no outward Riches, no Smiles of
great

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great Men, no outward Comfort, shall have so much of my Heart as thy sweet self. O increase my Faith, my Hope, my Love, my Charity; make my Soul a Temple of the Holy Ghost! O come, come, thou Bridegroom of my Soul, come and dwell in me for ever.





C H A P. IV.

*Of the Particulars to be observ'd after
we have been at the Lord's Table.*

Conscience.

AND is this all that is to be observ'd
upon this Occasion.

Christ. No: For after I have been made
Partaker of these Mysteries and Tokens
of God's Love, I must,

I.

Bless God for the Opportunity I have
had of going with the Multitude to the
House of God, with the Voice of Joy and
Praise, with the Multitude which keeps
Holy-day.

I must magnify his Goodness, who so
lov'd the World, as to give his only be-
gotten Son, to the End, that all those that
believe in him should not perish.

I must

I must summon my Thoughts to enter into some such Meditation as this.

Whence is it, that the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords, in whose Eyes the very Angels are not pure, should come to visit such a Wretch as I ! O my Lord ! To whom dost thou stoop ? What is that Creature, that thou bowest thus low to ? A Den of Thieves, an Habitation of Vipers, a Vessel of Dishonour : O how often have I polluted my self, even after thou hast wash'd me ! Is it possible that God will dwell in such a polluted House ? Is it possible, that God will come, and feast, and sup with such an unprofitable Servant ! O my Soul ! It is not only possible, but thy Lord hath done it to Day ; thine Eyes have seen the mighty Works of thy Redeemer. Thou hast seen him converse to Day with a Wretch, that hath undone what God hath done, hath render'd him Evil for Good, and Hatred for his Goodwill. Thou hast seen the Lord this Day, vouchsafing to sit with one who is full of Bruises and putrifying Sores, and those not bound up, nor mollify'd with Ointment.

Alas, my Lord ! I have abus'd the mighty Creator, to please a Murderer ; affronted the great Preserver of Men, to please a Friend ; and under-valu'd him that call'd me to Salvation, to please an usurping Tyrant. I can give no Reason why
I have

I have offended thee, so unreasonable a Thing is Sin; and that which should have led me to Repentance, hath harden'd me against thee, even thy Goodness and Patience; and could fair Weather make me angry?

What didst thou see in me, Lord! that should attract thee, and make thee leave the highest Heavens to descend into an Abyss of Misery?

O my Jesus! Water my Soul with the Tears thou hast shed, anoint me with the Myrrh of thy Grief and Sorrow, tye me by thy Bonds, let thy Scourges soften my Heart, let thy Derisions strengthen me, let thy Cross raise me; reign over me, do with me what seems good to thy Power, Wisdom, and Goodness. O let me never depart from thee: Let not the Creature draw me more than the Creator, Vanity more than Eternity, Misery more than Felicity, Filthiness more than Beauty, Slavery more than Greatness, Bitterness more than Sweetness. My Beloved is mine, and I am his, he feeds among the Lillies. O that thou wert as my Brother that suck'd the Breasts of my Mother, I would kiss thee, yea, I should not be despis'd.

O Lord! all my Desire is before thee, take away from me whatever doth displease thee. Give me an humble Heart, that I may be content to be counted as Dung for thy Sake: Give me an obedient Heart,

Heart, that I may be entirely guided by thee: Give me a strong Heart, that I may cheerfully bear whatever thy Hand lays upon me: Give me a tender Heart, that I may be kindly affectionate to my Neighbour: Give me a free Heart, that nothing may hinder me from running to thee: Give me a Heart of Flesh, that I may love thee perfectly.

Praise ye the Lord, I will praise the Lord with my whole Heart, in the Assembly of the Upright, and in the Congregation. The Works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have Pleasure therein: His Work is honourable and glorious, and his Righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made his wonderful Works to be remembred. The Lord is gracious, and full of Compassion, he hath given Meat to them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his Covenant! He hath shew'd his People the Power of his Works, that he may give them the Heritage of the Heathen. The Works of his Hands are Verity and Judgment; all his Commandments are sure, they stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in Truth and Uprightness. He sent Redemption to his People; he hath commanded his Covenant for ever: Holy and Reverend is his Name: He raises the Poor out of the Dust, and lifts the Needy out of the Dung-hil, that he may set him with Princes,
even

even with the Princes of his People. Praise ye the Lord.

II.

I must pray for the Congregation, and my Fellow-Christians, that do eat of the same Bread, and drink of the same Cup, with me, that they may all be satisfy'd, as with Marrow and Fatness, and their Souls may live.

I must beg that none of them may receive the Grace of God in vain; that they may keep and stand to the Conditions of the Covenant they have made or renew'd with God, that they may indeed fight for the Future against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and be more than Conquerors, through him that lov'd them, the Lord Jesus Christ.

My Love to Christ must constrain me to wish and beg that every Man may love him, else he doth not appear truly lovely to me.

I must entreat the Father of Mercies to dispense his Spirit abundantly at this Time, that the Love of Christ prevailing, may pull down in my Fellow-Receiver all the strong Holds of Iniquity, and all Imaginations, which exalt themselves against the Obedience of Christ Jesus: That Christ may reign victoriously in every one of them, live in them, act in them, govern them by his Spirit; that they may indeed bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit,
Love,

Love, Joy, Peace, Goodness, Faith, Gentleness, Meekness, Temperance, &c.

I must be importunate with God to make them all Partakers of the Benefits of Christ's Death and Passion, even of that Pardon, Peace, and Salvation, he hath purchas'd; and cause them to walk worthy of it, like Persons that are sensible of the Greatness of the Favour, and the Depth, and Breadth, and Length, and Heighth of the Love of God, and consequently may be fill'd with the Fulness of God.

III.

I must be thankful for the Honour I have receiv'd at such a Time. I must look upon't as more than ordinary Preferment, that God hath vouchsaf'd me a Place at his Table, admitted me into the Number of his Children, made me Partaker of the Promises of the Gospel, open'd his Bosom to me, receiv'd me into Favour, assisted me with the Spirit, given me a Right to the Tree of Life, and visited me with his Salvation.

Here the Words of *David* may justly be apply'd; My Soul shall joy in thy Strength, O Lord; and in thy Salvation, how greatly may I rejoyce! Thou hast given me my Heart's Desire, and hast not withheld the Requests of my Lips! Thou hast prevented me with the Blessings of Goodness, thou settest a Crown of pure Gold on my Head; I ask'd Life of thee, and thou gavest me,

me, even Length of Days for ever and ever. My Glory is great in thy Salvation: Honour and Majesty hast thou laid upon me, for thou hast made me blessed for ever: Thou hast made me exceeding glad with thy Countenance; therefore will I trust in the Lord, and through the Mercy of the most High I shall not miscarry: Thine Hand shall find out all my spiritual Enemies, thy right Hand shall find out all those that hate thee. Be thou exalted, Lord, in thy own Strength; so will we sing and praise thy Power.

IV.

I must go Home rejoycing and praising God: Praise is commonly for the Upright; the poor Cripple did so, when he was heal'd, and have not I far greater Reason to do so? Behold, I am heal'd at this Time from mine Infirmary, and shall not this Praise be still continually in my Mouth.

I must say in my Heart, my Soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit rejoyces in God my Salvation; I will extol thee, O God, my King, and I will praise thy Name for ever. Every Day I will bless thee, and praise thy Name for ever and ever. O, all ye that fear the Lord, come, and I will tell ye what he hath done for my Soul. His Love hath overcome my Corruption, his fervent Charity my Coldness, his Goodness my Sins and Follies. Except the Lord had been on my Side,
now

now might I say, if the Lord had not been on my Side, when Temptations and Corruptions rose up against me, then they had swallow'd me up quick; when their Wrath was kindled against me, then the Waters had over-whelm'd me, the Stream had gone over my Soul: Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given me over as a Prey unto their Teeth. My Soul is escap'd as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler; the Snare is broken, and I am escap'd. My Help is in the Name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth.

V.

Being made whole, I must for the Future take heed, and sin wilfully no more: Having wash'd my Feet, I must not defile them again. I must stand upon my Watch, and shun those Occasions which formerly led me into Sin.

I must be cautious and afraid of an ill Word, as much as of an evil Action; and my very Thoughts must be purg'd from that Filth, that us'd to cleave to them.

I must strangle an evil Suggestion in its Birth; and when I find any Motion rising in my Mind, that looks like Envy, or Pride, or Desire of Vain-glory, or Greediness after the World, I must check it upon its first Appearance.

I must bid an eternal Farewel to Unbelief and Mistrust of God's Providence, and

H

shun

shun those sinful Compliances with Men, which hertofore I us'd to be guilty of.

I must not only watch against grosser Sins, and such as Jews and Heathens can avoid, but against the secret Disorders and Errors of my Heart, which none sees but God, who is above all, blessed for evermore.

VI.

I must frequently compare my Actions and Behaviour with the Vow and Promise, and solemn Resolution I have made in the holy Sacrament; whether my Deportment be agreeable to those Engagements, whether I stand in Awe of those Vows and Promises, and whether they influence my Thoughts, and Words, and Practices; whether my Hatred of Sin encreases, and Love to Holiness grows steady and unmoveable; whether I check my self upon feeling an Inclination or Propensity to a sinful Act, with such Thoughts as these:

Is this the Effect of my late Vow? Is this to stand to the Covenant I lately made with God? Is it possible I can be so perfidious as to break with God? Hath the Cross of Christ so little Power with me? Shall it not restrain me from such a Sin as this? Foolish Creature! Shall a little Profit or Pleasure tempt me to please the Devil and wrong my immortal Soul? I am ty'd by a solemn Promise, made in
a most

a most solemn Place, by a Promise made to God, by a Promise seal'd with the Blood of Jesus, not to do it; and shall I presume to do it, or hope for Pardon after this Presumption.

I must take Notice, whether the Thoughts of Christ's Death make my Passions weak, whether they lessen the Heat of them, whether they repress their Fierceness, whether they work in me that Contempt of the World, which was so signal in my dear Lord and Master.

I must ever and anon look how my Graces thrive, whether no Weeds grow among them, that are like to choke the wholesome Herbs.

VII.

I must now study Self-denial, even in Things lawful, and that seem to have no Harm in them: Self-denial in eating and drinking, in my Cloaths, in my Recreations, in my Time, in my Discourses, in my Wit, in my Reading, in my Profit, in my Ease, and in my Sleep.

I must now take Heed I do not eat and drink to Satiety, but labour still to rise from my Meals with an Appetite.

I must now and then humble my Soul with a religious Fast, and many Times forbear eating of that Dish I have most Mind to, to bring my sensual Desires into Order.

I must not imitate every vain Fashion I see other People use, but must be very modest and decent in my Garb, and, having Means and Opportunities to buy me better, reserve that Money I would have laid out upon a richer Suit, for pious Uses.

I must not think every Recreation lawful, because it's commonly us'd by Men who are none of the worst. I must not encourage the Vanity of Men and Women that are in Love with Stage-Plays by my Example, as being Things I abjur'd in my Baptism: But my Recreation must be such as may fit me for spiritual Devotions.

I must not spend my Time, as some luxurious and idle People do, in needles and complemental Visits, in playing at Cards and Dice; but in Words, and Actions, and Discourses that may be useful and profitable either to the Souls or Bodies of my Family and my Neighbours.

I must not censure or judge my Neighbours rashly in my Speeches and Discourses, and not be easily drawn to give a Verdict or Judgment of People, except it be in their Praise and Commendation, if they do deserve it.

I must not give my self too great Liberty in Jestings, but forbear blurting out a witty Saying, if it be smutty or abusive, or any Way prejudicial to my Neighbours Credit and Reputation.

I must

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I must not give my self to reading of Romances, and such Books as serve to render the Mind vain, and the Affections loose, and regardless of spiritual Things.

I must express my Gratitude to God for the temporal Gain and Profit his Hand sends me, by consecrating some Part of it to good Uses; nor must I be fond of that Profit which ariseth from undermining my Neighbour.

I must not study the Ease of my Flesh much; but take Opportunities to use it to some Hardships, that it may become more obedient to my Reason.

I must not stay at my Sport so long as my sensual Appetite inclines me, but use only so much of it, as may render me serviceable to God and Man.





C H A P. V.

*Of the absolute Necessity of living up
to the Rules aforesaid.*

Conscience.

AND dost thou verily believe that this
is the Way to eternal Life.

Christ. Yes, certainly; for this is the
Way that the primitive Believers walk'd
in.

They did not think that Heaven was
to be gain'd at a cheaper Rate, and why
should I? Thus did the Apostles, thus did
their Followers, and without such Self-
denial, they thought there was no arriv-
ing to Happiness. Besides, this is most
agreeable to the Precepts of the Gospel;
and why should I think that I may be
sav'd another Way than God himself hath
appointed?

Consc. If thou art perswaded that this
is the Way, Lord, why dost thou not set
about

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about it? Why art thou so loath to come to it? Why dost thou act so contrary to it, when every Moment thou art in Danger of Death, and upon thy Death there depends Eternity.

Christ. O this base, this wicked World hinders me, the ill Examples of my careless Neighbours, Care of getting a Livelihood, the many Crosses and Disappointments I meet with, Hopes of having more Time hereafter, the Company I converse with, the People I have to deal with, Fear of Want, and the Calling and Condition I am in, are such Impediments I know not how to shake off.

Consc. Is it not possible to live in the World, and to keep thy self unspotted from it? If it be not, live a Beggar rather, live despis'd, live contemptible, live disregarded by all Men, rather than not enter into these everlasting Joys. Shall a pleasant sinful Life hinder thee from the everlasting Enjoyment of God? Shall the Fawnings and Applauses of Men hinder thee from the eternal Applause of Angels? Think, if thou wert standing at the great Tribunal, trembling at the eternal Horror thou art in Danger of, think whether thou would'st not wish that thou had'st liv'd in Caves and Holes, poor, destitute, afflicted for a few Years, rather than have come to this miserable End? Why should the Examples of thy careless Neighbours

hours move thee, when thou knowest there are but few that will be sav'd? Canst not thou get a Livelihood, except thou art covetous and greedy after the Glories of the World? If thou canst but get Food and Raiment, content thy self; and that most certainly thou wilt get, if thou art industrious in thy lawful Calling, and darest but trust God. Crosses, Losses, and Disappointments are necessary for thee, to drive thee from Earth to Heaven; and if all this while thou dost not lose thy Soul, thou art safe enough. Do but look upon thy Soul as worth more than a thousand Worlds, and none of these Things will deject thee. Thy Hopes of having Time to repent hereafter is a meer Cheat; and if thou trust to that, thou wilt never be sav'd. A spiritual Life is a Thing of Labour, and Pains, and Circumspection: And canst thou be so silly, as to think a few careless Prayers will at last plant it in thee? Alas! These are childish Reasonings. The Company thou conversest withal, if they are thy Bane, must be shaken off, whatever comes on't. There is no dallying in a Thing of this Consequence; and if other Men will poison themselves, why should'st thou? Let the People thou deal'st with be never so bad, that's no Example for thee to follow: If they are unreasonable, why should'st thou lose thy Wits and thy Salvation for their Sakes? If they
cheat

cheat or abuse thee, they do themselves more Wrong than thee; nor will thy fuming and fretting at them convert or bring them into a better Temper. Why should'st thou be afraid of Want, when thou dost not see a Bird starve or die for Want of Food? And can Want be grievous, when the Author and Captain of thy Salvation was in Want, and his Followers were so too, and yet did live in Heaven? Either thy Calling is honest or dishonest: If dishonest, and an inevitable Occasion of sinning, away with it, and turn Plow-man or Servant, rather than live in it: If honest, do not involve thy self in too much Business; for that will certainly hinder thee from frequent Prayer and Meditation, and looking after the Concerns of thy Soul: And as for Necessaries, thy God will not suffer thee to want them.

Lift up thine Eyes, look upon this World: The greatest Part of the Men thou seest will certainly be eternally *miserable*. Why should'st thou venture with them? Dost thou think that howling with them at last will give thee any Comfort? There is a Prize put into thy Hand, why should'st thou slight it, and lament thy Contempt for ever? Neglect not the present Time: Do not let this Opportunity slip: Thy God waits for thee; Come in, before the Door be shut, believe in good earnest, and nothing will seem difficult.

Christ.

Christ. I am convinc'd; I yield; I have nothing to say against all this. Great God! help me; draw me after thee, and I will run. Up, up, my lazy, idle, sleeping Soul! Open thine Eyes, put on Resolution, wash away thy Filth, shake off thy Prison-Garment, gird up thy Loins, make Haste, run to God, break the Chains of Sin, and present thy Heart to the living God; lift up thine Eyes, view the holy Angels, hearken to their Hallelujahs, chace away thy Darkness, cleanse thy self, become an humble Spouse of the Lord Jesus, feed thy self with his Beauty, kiss him with the Lips of Faith, make him thy Darling, receive him into thy Bosom, quench thy Thirst with his Blood, hold him fast, do not let him go, sing his Praises, admire his Love, meet him by Repentance, keep him by holy Fervors, honour his Name, dare to speak for him, be not asham'd of him, confess him before Men, and he will confess thee before his Father and his holy Angels.

PRAYERS



P R A Y E R S

A N D

D E V O T I O N S

To be used Before and After Re-
ceiving the *HOLY SACRAMENT*
of the *LORD'S SUPPER*.

I.

*A Confession to be said by Way of
Preparation.*

O Thou great Creator, Redeemer
and Sanctifier of Men! When
I reflect upon my Life, how
contrary to thy holy and whol-
some Laws, how unlike the Lives of
thy Saints, how unworthy of thy Mer-
cies and Favours it hath been, how can I
forbear

forbear blushing! How can I forbear prostrating my self before thee! How can I forbear falling into the humblest Posture my Soul and Body is capable of! How have I abus'd thy Goodness! How have I affronted thy Charity! How have I trespass'd upon thy Patience! How have I resisted thy tender Calls! How hast thou waited for me, while I have been stubborn! How hast thou courted me, while I have been vain! How hast thou caress'd me, while I have been careless! How deep ought my Contrition to be! How profound my Sorrow! How profuse my Tears!

I have mourn'd for a dead Corps; I have wept for a deceas'd Relation; I have griev'd to see the Body of my Friend left without a Soul: Yet have not mourn'd for God's departing from me, nor wept for the Deadness of my Heart, nor griev'd to see my self depriv'd of thy Grace and Mercy.

O my Lord! I see my Folly, I perceive I have gone astray, I am sensible I have dishonour'd thee: How different do my Sins appear to me now, from what they did before! They look more dismal, more dreadful, more bloody, than once they did! Now I would mourn, now I would take on for them, now I would deplore them!

O touch this frozen Heart, that it may melt! O Jesu! Look upon these Eyes of mine, that they may flow with Water! O, behold me from the Cross, that I may weep
bitterly

bitterly! There is Hopes that if I mourn
I shall be comforted; if I weep I shall
laugh at last; if I grieve I shall rejoyce.

O, my God, I long to hear thy joyful
Voice; *Be of good chear, thy Sins are forgiven
thee!* I long to rejoyce in thee! I long to
be bless'd with the Light of thy Counte-
nance! But the Sun will not shine out
'till after the Rain.

O then, water this Face of mine, speak
the Word, bid the Waters flow, bid peni-
tential Showers enrich this barren Ground,
and let me feel thy warmer Beams; thy
Love will refresh me, thy Presence will
revive me, and my Garments of Heavi-
ness will be turn'd into Garments of
Praise and Exaltation.

O, my Jesus! thou didst hang naked on
the Cross, that I might be deck'd with
thy purple Robes! Thou wast wounded,
that I might be heal'd! O, heal me, and
I shall be heal'd! Come, dearest Physician,
and thy Servant shall be whole.

Behold, Lord! here comes a poor Prodi-
gal, quaking and trembling to thy Throne!
I come from a far Country, from the Land
of Darkness, from the Borders of the burn-
ing Lake, from the Frontiers of Hell. I
come miserable and naked! I come beg-
ging, that thou would'st put a Ring upon
my Finger, and betroth me to thy self in
Righteousness. The Request is bold, but
thy self givest Encouragement to it.

I

I have

I have no Merit, I can plead no Desert. Here thou seest nothing but filthy Rags. O throw thy Mantle over me. I have heard that thou lov'st to manifest thy greatest Power in the greatest Weakness, thy greatest Strength in the greatest Infirmary. I have heard that thou lov'st to spread thy Skirts over those that are destitute and afflicted, that are cast Abroad, have no Eye to pity them, and know not where to address themselves for Relief. Thou hast promis'd to such to open Rivers for them in high Places, and Fountains in the Midst of Valleys. When the Needy and Thirsty seek for Water, thou, the God of *Israel*, wilt not forsake them.

O my Lord! if Misery be a Motive to Mercy, here thou seest it in the highest Degree! What mighty, what marvellous Things hast thou done for me! Yet have I run away from thee! What Haste have I made to get out of thy Sight! How afraid have I been of serving thee! Thou hast been my greatest Friend, and I have us'd thee like an Enemy! How have I shunn'd thy Counsels, as if they had been big with Death and Thunder.

Ah, foolish Creature! How have I forsaken thee the Fountain of living Waters! How fond have I been of broken Cisterns! How enamour'd with muddy Puddles! Ah, my Father, how didst thou pity me, how didst thou bewail my Blindness! With
what

what sorrowful Eyes didst look upon my Wilfulness! Behold, my Lord! I do return, I return, that I may look upon thee; I return, that thou mayst look upon me; I return, O, do thou rejoyce over me! O, let there be Joy in the Presence of thy holy Angels over this Sinner who repents.

I am troubled, I am exceedingly troubled, that I have made no answerable Returns to thy Love; that thy Grace hath been bestow'd upon me in vain; that thy Mercy hath been thrown away upon such a Wretch.

Oh, the Baseness! Oh, the Ingratitude! Oh, the Disingenuity that I have been guilty of! Thou hast been my greatest Benefactor! How freely, how lovingly, how candidly hast thou visited me! Yet I have resisted thy Power, despis'd thy Wisdom, undervalu'd thy Goodness.

Thou would'st have torn down my strong Holds of Iniquity, and I would not; thou would'st have taught me my Duty to God and Man, and I refus'd it; thou would'st have made me holy as thou art holy, and I scorn'd it.

Ungrateful Worm! Do I thus reward the Lord my God! Could I recompense such Mercies, with such Sins! Such Favours, with such gross Neglects! Thy Condescension, with Pride! Thy Humiliation, with Envy! Thy Love, with Anger! Thy Bounty, with slight and slovenly Performances!

Thy Readiness to relieve me, with Disobedience! Thy Charity, with Contempt of my Neighbour! Thy Blessings, with Revenge! Thy Benefits, with Averseness from Virtue and Goodness! Thy Munificence, with Vanity! and the Showers of thy Grace, with Earthly-mindedness.

Ah, how are my Sins multiply'd! How like a heavy Burden are they become too heavy for me to bear! But Oh, my God, thy Mercy is over all thy Works! Thy Mercy is greater than my Sins! My Sins have taken hold upon me! What shall I do? I am a Burden to my self: I am bow'd down with the Weight of my Transgressions. Whither, O my Lord, should I go, but to thee, who feedest the Hungry, who loosest the Prisoners, who givest Sight to the Blind, who raisest them that are bow'd down.

Thou hast Pity on Sinners, thou conversest with them, thou eatest with them; receive me graciously, love me freely, think upon thy Mercy, think upon thy Blood, think upon thy Tears, and accept of me! I am surrounded with Dangers, encompass'd with Enemies, encircled with hellish Monsters; yet in the Midst of these Pressures I hear thee saying, *Come to me all ye who are weary, and heavy laden.*

Shall I hide my self, as *Adam* did in Paradise? Shall this World fright me away? Shall I refuse to come, when thou call'st
in

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in this still Voice? No, no, I will confess my Transgression, and thou wilt forgive the Iniquity of my Sin.

I will harden my Heart no more; I will turn a deaf Ear to thee no more. I will stand out no longer; I will resist thy Light no longer; I will grieve thee no more, I will afflict and vex thy holy Spirit no more.

O, infinite Goodness! O, wonderful Love! though with the Publican I dare not lift up my Eyes to Heaven, yet with the humble *Magdalen* I will come behind thee weeping, and wash thy Feet with my Tears, and kiss them.

O, let me hear the blessed News of Pardon from thy Mouth! Thou camest, Lord, thou camest, not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance; and of these I am Chief.

If thou wilt converse with Sinners, here is one that wants thy Help, and that stands in Need of thy Cure; full of Diseases, full of Sores, full of Weakness, full of Errors, full of Infirmities, a Prodigy of Frailty.

Here, Lord, here is Work for thy strong Hand, and for thy mighty Arm! In this Heart are Devils that must be expell'd by thy Power. Stretch forth thy Hand, and save me.

Here is an Object to exercise thy omnipotent Hand upon. My Cure requires Miracles: It's no ordinary Virtue that will set me to rights again. Thou, thou, O

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Lord, must come and strike thy Hand over the fore Place, and my Leprosy will be gone.

Thy Prophet cries by thy Order, *Return unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to Anger, and repents him of the Evil: I believe, Lord, I believe; my Heart is wounded within me. I come, I come.*

Father, I have sinn'd against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be call'd thy Son, make me as one of thy hired Servants. But then I desire no other Hire, no other Wages but thy self: Thou art my exceeding great Reward.

Oh! how bitter a Thing it is to forsake thee! What have I got by offending thee? What have I gain'd by sinning against thee! Nothing but Shame, and Horror, and Trembling, and Confusion.

Darkness hath cover'd me, the Shadow of Death hath fallen upon me! What Fruit had I then in those Things whereof I am now asham'd? My Soul hath been divested of her Innocence, her Joy, her Peace, her Comfort, and her Satisfaction.

And, O my Jesus, didst not thou stand my Friend now! Great Mediator, didst not thou stand in the Gap now, and plead for me! O my Redeemer, didst not thou interceed for me, I must be prostituted and expos'd to eternal Laughter and Derision.

Good Lord! How pitiful, how wretched, how trivial, how impertinent, how incon-

siderable was that Pleasure, that Profit, that Thing, for which I did affront and dishonour thee!

When I look upon the Creatures, either above or below, I wonder how they were able to contain themselves, and not vindicate their Master's Honour, which they saw abus'd by me; I wonder they did not fall upon me, and crush me into Perdition, when they saw how bold, how presumptuous this Caitiff was!

O my Lord! For this my Soul shall mourn in secret; even for this, that I have not lov'd the better, that I have not sought thee more, that I have not approach'd thee with greater Veneration!

Henceforward, Lord, if all the Peasures, all the Riches, all the Honours of this World were concenter'd in the Sin I formerly liv'd in; it should be no Temptation to me, I would tear the Tyrant out of his Seat; it should usurp thy Place no more: I would pull it out of its Throne, it should find no Harbour in me: Thy Love should constrain me to part with it. I will crucify thee no more. I have trampled too long upon thy Mercy, I will make light of it no more.

O, my Jesus! remember thy Agonies, remember thy Pain, remember thy Sufferings, remember thy Death, and forget my Sins.

Thy Servant *David* cry'd once, *I have sinn'd*, and thou didst presently take away his
his

his Sin. My Sighing is not hid from thee. O, do not hide thy Face from me! *Manasseh* look'd up to thee, and thou hadst Respect unto his Prayer.

O give Ear to my Prayer too, that goes not out of feign'd Lips! The *Ninevites* humbled themselves, and thou wast entertained; O, repent thy self of the Evil thou hast said thou wouldst do unto me, and do it not. *Peter* wept, and thou gav'st him a gracious Look. I water my Couch with my Tears, O smile upon me too, and say, *I have redeem'd thee, thou art mine.*

I love thee, O Lord, and would have every Creature love thee. I would have all Things that have Breath praise the Lord. I would have every Creature shew forth thy Glory.

Thou hast lov'd me from all Eternity! Was ever such Love heard of as thine was! To come from the Mansions of the Bless'd, into a Vale of Tears! To advance such a Creature from Death to life Eternal! Thou hast made my Death a harmless, nay, a gainful Thing.

Thy Cross hath rectify'd all; there was Death in the Pot, but thou threwest in Meal, and didst sweeten all. O, blot out the very Foot-steps of my Sins, and set me as a Seal upon thine Heart; so will I give Thanks in the great Congregation, my Lips shall praise thee.

O, my

O, my Life! I would prefer thee above all thy Creatures! I would look upon all these outward Comforts as a Drop in the Bucket, and on thee as the Ocean; on these as the small Dust in the Ballance; on thee, as the Rock of Ages.

I would love thee with all my Heart, I would love thee more than my self: O, that my whole Mind were united to thee! O, that I might know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucify'd! O, that all the Powers of my Soul might embrace thee! O, that I might seek thy Glory with stronger Desires than Worldings do their Wealth, or the Covetous the Increase of their Incomes! O, that I could adhere unto thee inseparably!

O, withdraw my Heart from every evil Way! Incline my Heart to all Goodness: Let not my Affections be henceforth corrupted with Love of the Creature: Let me not be weary of loving thee: Let nothing overcome my Love, let nothing damp it.

O, enable me to say, *Who shall separate me from the Love of God?* O, draw my Soul with Cords of Love, with this Love wound and pierce my Heart, and make it sick, that it may insatiably long for thee! O, I could love thee without ceasing, love thee without Bounds, love thee without Measure! O, let my Soul melt with this Fire! And purge away that Filth which doth so easily beset me!

Take

Take away from me all that doth displease thee; refine in me all that pleases thee; be thou ever present with me; live in me, thou Fountain of Life, and let me live in thee; and let that Charity live in me, which suffers long and is kind, which envies not, which vaunteth not it self, which is not puffed up, which doth not behave itself unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no Evil, rejoices not in Iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth, bears all Things, believes all Things, hopeth all Things, endureth all Things, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

II.

A Prayer for Faith.

O Thou, from whom every good and perfect Gift descends, who givest to all Men liberally, and upbraidest not; thou callest, *Seek ye my Face*; thy Face, Lord, will I seek! Thou hast said, O Lord, thy Mouth hath spoken it, if ye had but Faith as a Grain of Mustard-seed, ye should say unto this Mountain, be thou remov'd, and cast into the Sea, and it should obey you.

O my Lord! I have Rocks to be displaced, Mountains to be remov'd, vast Loads to be freed from; Rocks of Unbelief, Mountains of

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of Sin, Loads of Iniquity! Oh, lend me
thy helping Hand.

None can give Relief, none can succour,
none can do me any Good, but thy self.
How dark, how dull, how doubtful is my
Faith! sometimes it blazes, then it disap-
pears again; sometimes it's vigorous, then
it's weak, and grows remiss again.

I believe in Sun-shine, and faint in a
storm: Sometimes I get a Sight of thy Glor-
y, then I lose it again.

O, how uneven is my Faith! When thy
Candle shines over my Head, and I wash
my Feet in Butter, I believe; but where is
my Faith in the dark, when the Fig-tree
doth not blossom, when there is no Fruit
on the Vine, when the Labour of the Olive
doth fail! O how it sinks at such Times! O,
how weak it grows! Lord, I believe, help
my Unbelief.

O, thou Son of Righteousness, thou
bright Morning Star, thou mighty Star of
Jacob, shine upon me, shine upon this dark
Soul of mine, press in by thy piercing
Beams, scatter the Clouds of my Unbelief;
dispel those Mists, as Chaff is driven away
by the Wind, so drive them away, O thou
holy One of Israel.

I believe, but my Faith doth not rouse
me from my spiritual Slumber; I believe
but my Faith doth not overcome Difficul-
ties. I believe, but my Faith doth not
put me upon Self-denial; I believe, but
my

my Faith doth not engage me to that Cautiousness of offending thee which is necessary to Salvation; I believe, but my Faith doth not make me laborious, doth not make me strive, and fight, and work, and enter in at the strait Gate; I do not believe as if I saw.

My Faith is not the Substance of Things unseen. I do not represent the future Glory to my Mind in such lively Characters, as if it were present to my Sight. I seem to rejoyce in thy Promises; but when I am to apply them, what Doubts, what Scruples, what Perplexities arise in my Mind!

I believe thou hast overcome Death? yet how do I tremble at its Approaches! I believe thou art present with me in Affliction, yet how often do I lose thy Image! I believe, my dearest Lord, that thou camest from Heaven to reveal to me thy Father's Will, yet I do not so readily obey it as I would! I believe, but am too often overcome by Passion, too often by a Temptation, too often by the World!

O, my Lord! give me an active Faith, a working Faith, a vigorous Faith, a lively Faith, an effectual Faith; a Faith which may oblige me to shake off all Dulness, all Drowsiness, all Laziness, and which may make me awake to Righteousness.

Give me a Faith that may surmount all Hardships, may be afraid of nothing, of no Bear, no Lyon in the Way. Give me

a Faith that may make me bold as a Lyon, courageous in Danger, resolute in the greatest Tryals, and magnanimous under the greatest Burdens. A Faith I want, which may make all that is within me stoop to the Yoke of Jesus, which may cross my Flesh and Blood, crucify my vain Desires, and dash mine inordinate Affections.

O give me a Faith which may make me tender of thy Glory, loth to do any Thing that may be offensive to thee, unwilling to displease thee, the Author of my Being.

Give me a Faith which may oblige me to labour in thy Vineyard, and work out my Salvation with Fear and Trembling; a Faith that may look into Eternity, survey the glorious Mansions prepar'd by the Son of God, live there, and converse there and draw Comforts and Consolations from that Perfection of Glory; a Faith which may live upon thy Promises, lay hold on them in Despite of Opposition, and claim them as my Heritage for ever; a Faith which may look Death in the Face, despise its Power, support it self with Christ's Victory, and sing with Triumph over it, *Oh, Death! Where is thy Sting?* A Faith which may make Afflictions easy, my Burden light, sweeten all my Troubles; a Faith which may purify my Heart, constrain me to Obedience, and compel me to a chearful run-

ning at thy Command and Order; a Faith which may controul all my Lusts, check my inordinate Desires, bear down all before it, set up the Lord Jesus in my Soul, and make every Imagination subject to him who must reign 'till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet.

O blessed Light, which enlighten'st every Man that comes into the World, direct my Steps, illuminate my Understanding; shew me the Way I must walk in, that no Error may mislead me, no false Doctrine corrupt me, no Heresy deceive me, no false Fire beguile me; stretch forth thy Hand, and hold thou up my Goings in thy Path, that I may get safe to my Journey's End.

I am a Traveller and Pilgrim here, go thou before me, and I'll follow thee; lead me through this barren Wilderness, and leave me not 'till I enter into *Canaan*.

It is not Lord, of him that runs, nor of him that wills, but of thee who shewest Mercy. As Flesh and Blood could not have reveal'd these Things unto me, so thou alone must enable my Faith to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil. Arise, O God, and let thine Enemies be scatter'd.

O, how am I beholden to thee! What Thanks, what Praises do I owe thee, that thou hast call'd me to the Light of thy Gospel! That thou hast discover'd to me
those

those Errors, which Persons of other Religions in the Word lie involv'd in! That I have Liberty to read thy Word, to peruse it, and to know the Things belonging to my Peace! Thou hast not dealt so with other Persons; and as for thy Judgments, they have not known them.

But what will this Knowledge profit me, if my Practice be not suitable, or my Belief strong, and firm, and vigorous? I tremble to think how many Thousands are like to perish for want of this Faith. Ah! how few do believe in good Earnest! How few believe with any lively Affections! How few act, and live, as if they did believe.

O most patient God, pity, pity that vast Multitude of Christian Unbelievers! See how Hell hath open'd her Mouth to swallow them up! O, thou that hast redeem'd them with thy Blood! Why should the Enemy run away with thy Purchase! See how these poor Creatures wander like Sheep without a Shepherd!

O, gather them! O, seek them, that thou may'st find them! Undeceive them, let them see how far they are from the Kingdom of God! O my Lord! I believe that thou art and wilt be a Rewarder of them that diligently seek thee; I believe if any Man will do thy Will, he shall know of thy Doctrine, whether it be of God or no; I believe, that not the least

Tittle of thy Word shall fail. O, increase my Belief! Let not my Faith rest upon thy Doctrine only, but let it have Regard to all thy Laws! O, let me so believe an approaching Eternity, as to be concern'd at the Thoughts of it! O, let me not only talk of it, but let my Belief rouse my Affections from their Slumber.

O, my Jesus! I believe thou wast crucify'd for my Sins: How then shall I live in Sin! assure me, that if I do, I do but mock thee: How can I believe my Sin odious, while I embrace and cherish it! How can I believe it kill'd thee, while I make much of it! How can I believe it drew Sweats of Blood from thee, while I water it and keep it warm!

O, I am weary of this vain Belief; rid me of it; deliver me from it! Let all my Neighbours see that I believe these Things indeed. Let the World see, by my Conversation, that these Things work upon me.

O, let me not only believe these great Things, but live them over! Come forth, my dearest Lord, and meet me! No Man can come to thee, but he whom thou drawest to thee: O, let me touch but the Hem of thy Garment, and I shall recover! Let me so believe in thee, that it may appear thou livest in me, that I may at last attain the End of my Faith, even the Salvation of my Soul: Great Author and
Finisher

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Finisher of my Faith, hear me for thy Mercies sake. *Amen.*

III.

A Prayer for a lively Hope.

O Thou in whom my Fathers hop'd! They hop'd in thee, and thou didst deliver them: Thou art all Goodness, all Sweetness, all Clemency! Who would not hope in thee! Thy Mercies bid me hope, thy Promises bid me hope, and all thy Revelations bid me hope.

O, thou Hope of *Israel*! Here I am, here I lie prostrate before thy Face; here my Soul intends to breath out her Desires.

O, my Lord! When will that happy Day come, that glorious Day which shall have no Night, no Clouds, no Darkeness! Thou hast spoke of it, thy Prophets have seen Visions of it, thy Apostles have declar'd it, one was wrapt up above the Clouds to take a View of it. The Son that came out of thy Bosom hath assur'd me of it. When shall mine Eyes behold that bright Day, when I shall enter into thy Joy, be made a Co-heir with Christ, be cloath'd in White, shine as the Stars, look upon thee, and not be ashamed.

Thou hast promis'd it, and shall not I hope for it; O, my Lord, thou seest me, thou art present with me, and knowest my

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Heart, my Sighs, my Desires, thou knowest I hope for it.

O, let this Hope be lively, let it be a Hope which may purify me even as God is pure. Nay, my very Flesh shall rest in Hope, and thou wilt not suffer my Body to see everlasting Corruption; thou wilt raise me from the Dust at last; all my Bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee!

I know that my Redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth: And tho', after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another: And having this Hope, O, assist me, O, persuade me, O prompt me to cleanse my self from all Filthiness, both of Flesh and Spirit, and to perfect Holiness in the Fear of God.

Deck my Soul with Humility, with Patience, with Constancy, that no Rods, no Stripes, no Prison, no Torment, no Shipwreck, no Perils of Waters, no Perils of Robbers, no Perils among my own Country-men, no Perils among Heathens, no Perils in the City, no Perils in the Wilderness, no Perils in the Sea, no Perils among false Brethren, no Weariness, no Painfulness, no Watchings, no Hunger, no Thirst, no Cold, no Nakedness, no Weakness, no Infirmary, no Honour or Dishonour, no good Report or evil Report, may discourage me from
I trusting

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trusting in thee! Tho' the Lord shall kill me, yet let me hope in him.

If in this Life only I have hope in Christ, I am of all Men most miserable.

The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the Strength of my Life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though a Host should encamp against me my Heart shall not fear: Tho' War should rise against me, in this will I be confident; for in the Time of Trouble he shall hide me in his Pavillion, in the secret of his Tabernacle he shall hide me, he shall set me upon a Rock.

Thou art he that took me out of the Womb, thou didst make me hope when I was upon my Mother's Breasts: O, let it not be in the Power of Men or Devils to shake this Hope. Let it be my Anchor, sure and stedfast, which no Waves, no Billows, no Storms, no Tempests, can move.

Whatever Evils befall me, let me think they come from a Father's Hand. Let no Prosperity, no Sun-shine, no Calmness, no smiling Fortune, subvert this Hope in my Soul. Let me look upon all these outward Comforts as Vanity, Vanity of Vanities, which can give no Ease, no Comfort, no Satisfaction to a Soul of a spiritual Appetite.

Let me thirst after nothing so much as after thy Love, as after spiritual Blessings, as after the hidden Manna, as after the
white

white Stone, which no Man knows, save he who receives it.

I will not hope in any Creature; I will arise and depart, for here is not my Rest. Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the Health of my Countenance, and my God.

My Soul, wait thou only upon God, for my Expectation is from him, he only is my Rock and my Salvation, he is my Defence, I shall not be mov'd. In God is my Salvation and my Glory, the Rock of my Strength, and my Refuge is in God. Trust in him at all Times, ye People, pour out your Hearts before him. Thou hast been a Shelter for me, and a strong Tower from the Enemy. From the End of the Earth will I cry unto thee, when my Heart is overwhelm'd.

O, my God, my Goodness extends not to thee: The Lord is the Portion of my Inheritance, and of my Cup thou maintainest my Lot.

Who was ever confounded that trusted in thee? Who was ever forsaken that hop'd in thee? Who was ever dispis'd that in good Earnest call'd upon thee? All hail, my dearest Lord, my Hope! I love thee, I embrace thee, I renounce all those lesser Goods which are in the World, that I may make thee my highest and my chiefest Good.

It is true, Lord, I am a Sinner, and have been a very ungrateful Wretch; the least of thy Mercies is more than I have deserv'd: My very Righteousness hath been as filthy Rags: But I will not trust in my Bow; neither is it my Sword that shall save me; but thy Mercy, O Lord, thy Mercy, and the Palms of thy Hands, on which thou hast engraven my Name, shall be my Refuge.

I have no Merits, no Deserts to trust to: I can claim nothing as my Right; all I am, and all I have, is thy Charity: What Goodness there is in me, is entirely owing to thy Grace and Compassion: With this thou crownest me, with this thou enrichest me, with this thou anointest my Head, that I may work in thy Vineyard, and receive the Recompence at Night.

I confide not in my Works, I depend not upon my Industry, I rest not in my own Labours; but in thy Blood, in thy Sweat, in thy good Pleasure, O glorious Son of God! Curs'd is the Man that trusts in Man, and makes Flesh his Arm. I will hope in thy Mercy, my Heart shall rejoyce in thy Salvation: Evening and Morning, and at Noon, will I pray, and thou wilt hear my Voice; thou hast said, *Ask, and ye shall have; Seek, and ye shall find, Knock, and it shall be open'd to you:* Who would not hope after this? Who would not rely upon thee after such a Promise?

O,

O, let me find Grace in the Sight of my Lord! I desire nothing else; this is the Heighth of my Wishes; this is it which engrosses the Faculties of my Soul. Thy Grace is the Jewel I want, the Pearl I stand in Need of, the Crown my Soul longs for.

Thou art my Witness, O Lord, that my Heart thinks so; thou hast Treasures of Mercy, thy Stores are large and inexhaustible! Thou bidst me come and buy without Money, and without Price, and my Soul shall live; Thou dost promise me more than Kings can promise; and no Wonder, for thou art greater and richer than all the Kings of the Earth.

Thou givest Rest to the weary Soul, and Strength to the Faint, therefore mine Eyes shall be towards the! O, let thine Eyes be open, and thine Ears attend unto the Prayer of thy Servant! Do thou chuse and sanctify this House, that thy Name may be there for ever, and let thine Eyes and thy Heart be here perpetually.

Thy Liberality and Bounty is immense and infinite! I cannot but hope in thee! O, my unbelieving Heart, could'st thou but trust him more, what great Things would'st thou see! His Mercy is upon thee, according as thou hopest in him. The more thou hopest, the greater is his Mercy.

O, my Lord! What stupendious Gifts dost thou present me with! What amazing Offers dost thou make to my Soul! Thou art

not

The Fire of the Altar.

III

not only willing to impart thy Graces to me; but in thy *Supper* givest me thy self! And here thou offerest to carry me in thy Arms to be my nursing Father, and to be Food to my hungry Soul! May it be unto me according to thy Word!

Come, Lord, lodge thou in my Soul, make it thy Dwelling-Place, anoint it with the Oil of Mercy, I will go and take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. Thy loving Kindness shall be before mine Eyes, and I will walk in thy Truth; I will not sit with vain Persons, neither will I go in with the Dissemblers: I will wash mine Hands in Innocency, so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord! That I may publish with the Voice of Thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous Works.

My Heart shall be inditing a good Matter, and I will speak of Things touching the King of Saints. Into thy Hands I commit my Spirit, thou hast redeem'd it, O Lord God of Truth! O, make thy Face to shine upon thy Servant, and O let me hope unto the End, for the Grace that is brought unto me at the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

IV.

A Prayer for Love and Charity.

O Thou who hast so lov'd the World, as to give thine only Son, to the End that all that believe in him should not perish,

rish, but have everlasting Life! What shall I do to love thee! What shall I do to be united to thee! What shall I do to get a Place in thy Bosom!

If I love thee not, I am undone; if thou dost not look exceeding lovely in mine Eyes, I am lost; if my Affections do not fix upon thee, I perish; I cannot be happy without loving thee! My Soul is destitute of her proper Good, if thou be not the object of my Delight! I am perfectly miserable, if thou be not the Center of my Spirit.

Love is the greatest Gift that's given to poor Creatures. Love enriches their Souls: Love makes their Faces shine: Love must brighten their Souls, and make them appear lovely in the Eyes of God: O, my Lord! Thou hast given me Faculties to love thee, Understanding to contemplate thy Beauty, and Mercy, and Perfection; Memory to retain the lively Apprehensions of thy Glory, and a Will to prompt my whole Man to suitable Actions.

The more I love thee the holier I am: The more I love thee the more I am with thee; for where I love, there is my Soul; where my Affections are, there is my Spirit; where my Treasure is, there will my Heart be also.

Who would look upon a Dunghil, that can view a glorious Palace? Who would hear the Screeches of Owls and Night-Ravens, that can hear melodious Musick? And why

why should I be taken with the Pomp and Glory of the World, which, in Comparison of thee, is a meer Dunghil? Or with the Caresses and Praises of mortal Men, which are perfect Howlings, compar'd with the Harmony thy Love doth make.

Shall I love Honour, and not love thee, who art the Fountain of it? Shall I love Pleasure, and not love thee, in whose Presence there is Fulness of Joy? Who can be likened unto thee, O Lord! And if nothing can be likened unto thee, I must love nothing like thee: And if I justly love that which is good, I must necessarily love thee more than all Things in this World; for thou art infinitely better than all Things in this World. There is nothing so good, nothing so precious, nothing so rich, nothing so amiable as thou art.

O, my Jesus! How great is thy Condescension! Thou knowest I could love nothing so well as what was like me, and in Compliance with thy Temper, (for thou knewest my Frame) thou becamest like me indeed; the Immortal became Mortal; the Eternal became an Infant: If therefore I love Man, who is naturally like me, how much more am I bound to love thee, who wroughtest a Miracle to become Man, that thou mightest be like me!

Love desires the Presence of its delightful Object, and can any Thing be more present than thou art? Thou art in me, and

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with me, and without me: Thou art present in all Places, at all Times, in all Companies; thou art willing to dwell in me, and make thine Abode in me; Thou art content never to depart from me.

Thou art strangely bountiful; who would not love thee? Whoever gave greater or larger Gifts, either more in Number, or more in Quantity, or longer for Duration, than thy liberal Hand?

From thee every good and perfect Gift comes down; what-ever Gifts I receive from thy Creatures, thou sendest them: The Creatures are but the Channells or the Pipes through which they are convey'd; and shall not I love the Fountain more than the Channel, the Spring more than the Pipe through which the Water runs, and the great Giver more than the Messengers that carry it?

Thou workest in all, thou inclinest the Hearts of the Bountiful, thou openest their Hands, thou turnest their Hearts into Charity; thou seasonest their Minds with Thoughts of me, and thou benedest their Wills to do me Good! And shall not I look up from the Creature to the Creator, and give him my dearest Love?

I will love thee, O Lord, I must love thee, for thou art sweet beyond Comparison, amiable without Parallel, lovely to a Miracle! Thou art the true Father of my Soul, thou providest for me, thou takest
Care

Care of me, thou art exceeding tender of me, thou bear'st me on thy Hands, on thy Wings, thou carry'st me as the Eagle doth her young; nay, thou offer'st me the happy Relation of Brother, and Sister, and Mother; for he that doth thy Will, shall be all this in thy Esteem; he shall be as dear to thee as these Relations are to mortal Men.

Thou art my Friend indeed! O my Lord, whither doth thy Love carry thee! Thou lay'st aside thy glorious Titles, and thy magnificent Names, and become'st my Friend! and never was a truer Friend than thou art and hast been to me.

No Vicissitude hath chang'd thee, no Revolution hath alter'd thee, no Accident hath estrang'd thy Heart from me! My Unworthiness doth not turn away thy Affections from me! Though thou dwellest on high, yet thou humblest thy self to behold the Ways of the Children of Men!

My Sores do not make thee loath me, my Infirmities do not move thee to cast me away, my Vileness doth not tempt thee to despise me.

Thou lov'st at all Times; if I am wounded, thou bindest up my Wounds; if I am broken, thou heal'st me; if I am griev'd, thou refreshest me; if I am in Danger, thou deliver'st me; if under Pain, thou givest me Ease; if under Trouble, thou comfort'st me. O my Jesus, thou art gone up to thy

Father and to my Father, and hast made us Friends.

Thou hast reconcil'd him to my Soul! Thou hast lov'd me before the Foundation of the World! How often hast thou in Mercy look'd upon me! How often hast thou pity'd me! I was unworthy of thy Compassion; yet, seeing me lie in my Blood, thou said'st, *Live, in thy Blood, live.*

What shall I say unto thee, O thou great Preserver of Men? No Words, no Language will reach thy Love, or give a tolerable Description of it; yet still this encreases my Obligations to love thee! And what a Mercy is it, that thou wilt give me Leave to love thee!

That this great, this glorious, this immense, this incomprehensible God, will vouchsafe to be lov'd by a Worm! What a Favour is it! Prize it, O my Soul! And think thou hear'st every Creature, that is beneficial to thee, calling upon thee to love him.

The Sun that shines upon thee calls to thee. *I give thee Light, that thou may'st admire the Father of Lights*: So doth the Moon, so do the Stars, so do all those Things whereby thou art fed, maintain'd, cloath'd, and preserv'd in Health: These all call, *We serve thee, that thou may'st serve thy God, and do Good to thee, that thou may'st love him, whose Hand hath plac'd us in these Stations.*

The Fire of the Altar. 117

O my God, shall I have such Monitors to love thee, and be deaf to the Call? How will all these rise in Judgment against me one Day, if I love thee not! How justly do I fall a Sacrifice to thy Wrath, if under such Exhortations I despise thy Love.

How many Souls have perish'd, and I am yet alive! How many have been struck dead in their Sins, and I am yet call'd to Repentance! How many do yet walk in Darkness, and I have the Honour to seek thy marvellous Light! Thou hast dealt more kindly by me than thou hast done by others.

O, how am I bound to love thee! I see the Odiousness of that Sin, which others doat on! I see the Deformity of those Vices, which others wallow in! I see the Beauty of that Virtue, which others scorn! I see the Charms of that Grace, which others laugh at! I taste of those Comforts, which others continue ignorant of!

I see the Reasonableness of thy Precepts, which others count an intolerable Yoke! I have some Sense of another World, while thousands live as if there were none! I see the Necessity of Holiness, while others make a Mock of Sin!

What Motives are these to love thee! Shall I be afraid, or ashamed, after all this to love thee! Every Sense I have bids me love thee! I cannot smell to any Thing, but I smell the Fragrancy of thy Love!

118 *The Fire of the Altar.*

I cannot taste any Thing, but I must taste how sweet and how gracious thou art! I cannot look upon any Thing, but I must see thy Goodness! The Oil of thy Love swims upon every Creature I touch or feel.

That Soul deserves to die that doth not love thee: In loving thee I live! Thy Love is better than Life! My Days will have an End; my Life, e're long, will pass from me! My Riches, my Glory, my Wealth, my Health, my Liberty, my Ease, my Friends, my Acquaintance, they will, e're long, expire; but if I love thee, that will remain with me to Eternity! My Love to thee makes me thine, and makes thee mine.

By loving thee, I shew that I am not mine own: Thou hast made me for thy self, and if I am not thine, I cannot be mine own; for at that Instant that I would be mine own, I cease to be thine. Thou art to me all that Heart can wish, or Reason can desire! Thou art my Light, my Pillow, my Rest, my Sun, my Meat, my Drink, my Glory, my Joy. Thou hast given me thy Son, and in giving him, hast given me more than ten thousand Worlds! And if this be not enough, thou art ready to give me more; shew me thy Love, and it suffices me.

Thou hast wounded me with thy Love! I will follow thee! O, let me do thy Will; let me do that which thou wilt, and not what I will.

The Fire of the Altar.

119

Despise me not ; forsake me not, O, do not go far from me ! Draw me after thee, and I shall run ! Woe is me, that I must dwell in *Mesheck*, and have my Habitation in the Tents of *Kedar*.

O, leave me not to my self ! I consecrate both my Soul and Body to thee ; employ them, O Lord, as it shall please thee best.

O forget me not, and let me never forget thee ! Let me rather die a thousand Deaths, than live without thee ! O, let me love thee so, that I may long to draw others to thy Love ! Let me be griev'd when Men do not keep thy Law ! Let it go to my Heart to see thee dishonour'd and affronted !

Thou threaten'st me with eternal Flames, if the Flames of thy Love cannot warm me now ; I am not worthy to love thee, yet thou art most worthy to be lov'd by me ! O, let me sigh, let me pant, let me breathe after thee !

O, my Life, let me live to thee ! O, my Glory, let me be content to die for thee ! O, my Refuge, let me ever run to thee ! O, thou eternal Love, let me be always mindful of thee, let me embrace thee ! Let me resolve not to let thee go, 'till thou hast brought me to that Place where I shall be for ever united to thee.

Withdraw mine Heart from the Creature ! Why should it go astray from thee ? I am sensible what Hurt my Love to the
Creature

Creature hath done me: It hath alienated my Heart from thee! it hath made thy Word a Savour of Death unto Death to me: It hath render'd thy Promises insipid to me: It hath made me slight thy Service: It hath made thy Ways nauseous and irksome to me! It hath made thy Laws tedious to me: It hath made me forget the Life I am to live for ever: It hath made me weary of thy Love, backward to Self-denial, made me ashamed of Christ, cool'd my Zeal, damp'd my religious Desires; and shall I harbour the Viper in my Bosom any more!

O, throw this Enemy out of my Soul! dispossess it of its Habitation, expel it by thy Power, make it vanish by thy Presence! I beg not Grace to hate any Thing that thou hast made; but thy Assistance, that I may love the Creature less than thee.

I would not have the Love of the Creature engross my Soul: I would not have it usurp Authority in my Heart: I would not have it take Place of my Love to thy sweet self: I would not give it the Ascendant in my Affections: I would have it subordinate to my Love: I would have it to be a Servant to my Love to thee: I would not have it juggle out thy Love.

I know, my dearest Lord, I must love my Neighbour too; I cannot love thee without I love him with an unfeign'd Love! I lie, if I say I love thee, whom I have not seen,
when

when I love not my Brother, whom I see;
but I would not love Man better than thee;
I would not obey him more than thee; I
would not comply with him to displease
thee; I would not prefer his Smiles or
Frowns before thy Favour, or thy Indigna-
tion; I would love him for thee, and in
thee; and O, thou that hast lov'd me so
as to die for me, grant me that Charity
which is the necessary Effect of my Love
to thee!

Thou hast lov'd my Neighbour as well
as my self: My Jesus! thou hast dy'd for
him as well as for my self! Though I must
stand amaz'd at the particular Mercy thou
hast shewn to me, yet the Light of thy
Favour hath shin'd upon my Fellow-Chri-
stians too!

O, let me love them with a pure Heart,
fervently! Hereby shall all Men know that
we are thy Disciples, if we love one ano-
ther. O my Lord! I am resolv'd to be
thy Disciple, and therefore will not only
love those that love me, but even those
that hate me.

O, make me tender-hearted, and com-
passionate to my Neighbour: Make me rea-
dy to forgive, ready to bear with his Infir-
mities, ready to believe him, ready to as-
sist him, ready to succour him; O, let all
Clamour, Malice, Hatred, Evil-speaking,
and Censoriousness, be put away from me!
rid me of all Guile, Hypocrisy, and Dish-
onesty. Let

Let it be known by my meek, humble, and charitable Temper, that the same Mind is in me which was also in Christ Jesus. In vain do I call my self thy Follower, if I tread not in thy Steps, or do not render Good for Evil, and shew all Meekness unto all Men.

When I am revil'd, let me not revile again! Let there not be any Root of Bitterness in me: Banish from me base Suspicions! Teach me to put a favourable Construction on other Mens Actions, and to overcome Evil with Good.

Mortify in me the Itch of Contradiction! Make me affable, courteous, kind, gentle! and let no Provocation sowre that Disposition in me! Make me patient and long-suffering, peaceable and easy to be intreated; give me a Temper that may make me rejoyce in the Prosperity of others.

Let all Pride and Envy die in me: Let me delight in Works of Mercy, in feeding the Hungry, giving Drink to the Thirsty, cloathing the Naked, visiting the Sick, comforting the Prisoners, counselling the Weak, supporting the Feeble, directing the Erroneous, reproving the Unwary, guiding the Blind, using Hospitality to Strangers.

Make me circumspect in my Speeches, that I offend not with my Tongue! Give me Presence of Mind upon all Occasions, that I may not speak or act rashly to my Neighbours

Neighbours Prejudice! O let thy Love be always before me, that I may have Compassion on my Fellow-Servant! O, let thy Blood supple my Heart, that it may melt at the Sight of his Wants and Necessities!

O let that Word sound always in my Ears, *That though I speak with the Tongue of Angels, and have no Charity, it profits me nothing*; I shall see thy Charity in the *Sacrament of the Supper*! I shall see what thou didst for me and all the World! I shall see what Inconveniencies thou didst endure to procure our Happiness! I shall see how thou didst deny thy self for our Sakes! I shall see how thou didst not count thine own Life dear to save ours! I shall see how gentle thou wast to thine Enemies, how thou prayedst for them that prosecuted thee, how thou didst bless them that did curse thee! I shall see what Pains thou tookest, what Anguish thou endurest to snatch us from Damnation.

O, let that Charity prevail with me! O, let that Goodness produce Bowels of Mercy in me, that, as much as in me lies, I may keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.

Make me willing to recede from mine own Right for Concord's Sake. O root out that base selfishness, which makes me so careless of my Neighbours Good.

O, thou eternal Truth! thou hast promis'd to write thy Laws in my Heart: O,
write

write this Law of Love with thine own Blood, and make the Characters so lasting, that nothing may blot them out! O let me love my self less, that I may love thee and my Neighbour more.

O, let that Fire of thy Love put out the impure Fire of my Lusts and Corruptions! O, let that Fire purify my Soul from those inordinate Passions and Desires which too often endanger it! Thou art the God that answerest by Fire, let me feel thy Fire and the Force of it; let it go through my Soul, and scatter Heat through every Part, that I may be transform'd and chang'd into Love!

Let me love thee vehemently, ardently, superlatively, constantly, and my Neighbour chastly, modestly, purely, sincerely, and inviolably! Whatever thou deniest me, deny me not this Love!

Remember thy Word unto thy Servant, in which thou hast caus'd me to hope! Thou hast said, I will give unto him that is a Thirst of the Water of Life freely; O give me this Love, else I faint! O spare me a little, that I may recover Strength, before I go hence, and be seen no more!

O thou Spirit of Love, blow upon me, and these dry Bones shall live! O Jesu! come and live in me; and if thou, who art Love and Charity it self, live in me, I shall love all that thou would'st have me love,
and

and be a Monument of thy Love, and share in thy everlasting Love. *Amen,*

Let the King of Heaven hear when I call.

V.

*A Prayer for Imitation of the holy Life
and Example of Jesus.*

O Thou who art the Way, the Truth, and the Life! I know thee, who thou art; the Son of the living God! who shall lead me into *Edom*, who shall bring me into the strong City, into that City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God! Wilt not thou, O Lord, strong, and mighty?

Hear, O my Soul! Thy Redeemer calls; *If any Man serve me, let him follow, and where I am, there shall also my Servant be.*

O my Lord, I had Need of a Guide in this Age, when the World lies in Wickedness! How many Ways to Ruin do I see! How many Nets do I see spread for me! What a Snare are even these outwards Comforts! How do they entice and draw the Heart away.

O Father of Mercy! How many thousand do I see beguil'd by the Riches and Pleasures of this Life! How insensible do they grow of that Life they are to live for ever! How forgetful of God? How enamour'd with the Gauds and Glories of

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this World! How does the Beauty of their Souls decay and wither away! And one teaches the other to go to Hell!

O my God! what shall I do among so many Enemies! Whither shall I turn my self in all this Darknes! How shall I behave my self among all these Precipices! Without thy Light I must needs be lost! Rise, rise, thou glorious Morning-Star, that I may be able to see my Way! Thou that art the Light of the World! He that follows thee, cannot walk in Darknes! Thou art my Sun, why should I be afraid of going astray? Thou art my Way, how can I be deceiv'd? Thou art Goodness it self, how can I mistrust thee when thou hast spilt thy Blood for me?

Tho' naturally thou dwellest in a Light inaccessible, yet of invisible thou becamest visible, on Purpose that I might follow, not the Father of Lies, not Lucifer, not that Enemy who transforms himself into an Angel of Light; but thee, in whom all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge are.

Great Physician of Souls! Thou camest down to prescribe me Physick, and that I might not be afraid to take it, didst take it before me, and of God becamest Man, that I might imitate thee in the Holiness of thy human Nature.

This is it, O my Lord, that my Soul desires, even to set thee before mine Eyes, to represent thee in lively Colours before my Mind,

Mind, and to conform to thy great Example! O my *Jesus*! Thy Spirit I want, which may change me into thy Image from Glory to Glory, from one Degree of Brightness to another, and enable me to see what Harmony, what Peace, what Order, what Content, what Satisfaction there was in thy innocent, spotless, and blameless Life.

O my God, my Soul longs to say with thy Apostle, I live; yet not I, but *Christ* lives in me. Once thou didst create me after thy Image, but I defac'd it; those curious Lines I darken'd and dash'd, yet thou hast given me Hopes to recover that Jewel; and, O my Lord, do thou place it in its Throne again! How do I long to have my Heart renew'd, and my Soul transform'd, that I may mind the Things of the Spirit with Sincerity and Earnestness!

Who but a Fool would not tread in thy Steps, my dearest Lord! Yet such a Fool, such a Sot, such a Beast I have been! I have seen thee lighting me to Heaven, and yet have loved Darkness better than Light!

O thou eternal Wisdom! I hate this Folly! I abhor this Stupidity! I will follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes! the Apostles follow'd thee, why should not I? whole Armies of primitive Believers follow'd thee, why should not I? Why should not their Example prompt me? Why should I have less Esteem for thee than they had?

My very Name obliges me to follow thee! What am I a Christian for, if I do not imitate thee! O let me not blaspheme that worthy Name whereby I am call'd! I blaspheme it, if by my vain Conversation I give thine Enemies Occasion to speak ill of thy Religion. Do I call my self by thy Name, and shall not that Name put me in mind of my Duty?

My Heart is stubborn, my Will perverse! O do thou bow it, make it ready, make me willing, make me expedite for this Work.

Thou tookest up thy Cross, O let me not dream of Beds of Roses! Thou wast subject to thy Parents, O make me submissive to my Superiours! Thou didst resist Temptations, Oh let me not be overcome by them! Thou didst despise the World, Oh let me not be enamour'd with it! Thou wentest about doing Good, Oh let me not be backward to Works of Charity!

Thou didst deny thy self, O let me not indulge my vain Desires! Thou didst work while the Day did last, Oh let me not harden my Heart in this my Day! Thou wast humble, Oh let the same Humility take Root in my Soul! Thou wast meek, O let this Meekness be the Rule of all my Actions! Thou didst not aim at Vain-glory, O let no such pitiful End defile my Soul!

Thou didst bear with the weak, Oh let me be tender-hearted and gentle too! Thou didst patiently endure Injuries, O, let me
not

not fret and murmur under them! Thou wast faithful in all thy Father's House, O, let me be so in the Duties of my Calling, and Relations! Thou didst receive and embrace the Penitent; O, let me rejoyce over those who are sorry for their Faults! Thou didst encourage Goodness and holy Inclinations! O let me cherish them; wheresoever I find them.

Thou didst do thy Father's Will, Oh let me not pretend Impediments! Thou didst Good for Evil, O let me not recompense Sin with Sin! A Sense of God's Goodness was Meat and Drink to thee, Oh let it be my Dyet too!

Thou wast a Pattern of Gravity, Oh let me not be vain and foolish in my Conversation! Thou didst spend thy self for the Good of Mankind, Oh let me not indulge my Ease too much! Thou didst entirely resign thy self to thy Father's Pleasure under the severest Tryals, O teach me this Art of Self-resignation too! Thou wast zealous for the House of God, Oh let not Luke-warmness spoil my Soul! Thou wast not taken with the Pomp and Glory of the World; Oh let me not be gull'd with these empty Shows! The Frowns and Contempt of Men could not make thee weary of being strictly conscientious; Oh let not these pitiful Things make me ashamed of thee and thy Gospel.

130 *The Fire of the Altar.*

O my Jesus, Thy Kingdom must suffer Violence, and whoever enters there, must force his Way through all Impediments! And what if I offer Violence to my Lusts and Passions for a Time, how sweet will it be, to lie incircled in thy Arms one Day, and to hear thee say, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.*

Thou dost promise me, that if I will fight for thee, thou wilt give me to eat of the Tree of Life, and to sit down with thee in thy Kingdom, at thy Table, and to be a King and a Priest for ever.

Do I believe this, and scruple fighting the good Fight? Do I believe this, and am I afraid of the World's Frowns? Do I believe this, and am I asham'd of the Severities thou call'st me to.

Why should I mistrust thee, when I see thee use the same Mortifications thou bid'st me chuse? If a Soldier see his King use the same Pains, Habit, and hard Fate, which the meanest Man in the Army uses, what Courage doth it infuse into him, to endure Hardship and other Difficulties, that may attend the various Enterprizes he is engag'd in.

O, my Lord! That very Contempt of the World, that Meekness and Humility, that Severity of Life, that Aversion from sensual Pleasures, that Enmity to Sin, that Hatred of Vanity, that Indignation against brutish Delights, that Sincerity, that Simplicity

city thou requir'st of me, thou didst observe, and practise, and perform thy self; so that thou lay'st the same Burden on my Shoulders that lay on thine; and if I die with thee, I shall live with thee too; if I suffer with thee, I shall reign with thee.

O then, I will not tarry! I will make Haste and conform to thine Example! I shall not fare worse than my King and Master did; and as I have born the Image of the Earthly, so shall I bear the Image of the Heavenly.

I will walk as my Jesus walk'd! O, my Lord! make me holy, as thou art holy, perfect, as my Father which is in Heaven is perfect! O my Lord! there is no other Way to Glory, but by thee.

Thou being exceeding rich, becamest poor to enrich my Soul! Thou camest not to do thine own Will, but the Will of him that sent thee! Put thine Arms under me, and I will not do mine own Will: I will follow thee through Fire and Water; I will follow thee through Bryars and Thorns, through good Report and evil Report.

O, chase away all slavish Fear from my Soul! Let me not be afraid of Difficulties! What can be difficult, where thou art both the Guide and the Encourager? Thou canst not deceive me; thou canst not delude me; it must be so as thou hast said; all Things are possible to him that believes: I'll chuse some Hardship here, that I may rest in
thy

thy Bosom hereafter; I'll be content to passthrough a dirty Way for some Time, that I may lie down in the green Pastures of thy Mercy for ever.

The Sight of thy Cross in the Holy Sacrament shall be my Motive: I'll draw Arguments from that Remembrance of thy Death, to die to the World. I will travel with thee; I will sail through the boisterous Sea of this Life with thee: And, O, my Jesus! let me arrive safe at last in the everlasting Harbour. *Amen. Amen.*

VI.

A Thanksgiving after the Receiving of the Lord's Supper, to be said either at Church or at Home.

AND now, what Reward shall I render unto thee, O holy, and blessed, and incomprehensible Trinity, for all the Benefits I have receiv'd at thy Hands, this Day! Awake, up my Glory: Awake, my outward and inward Man: I will sing and give Praise. Whence is it, that so poor a Wretch as I am, is crown'd with all this Mercy and Loving-Kindness,

O my Soul, thou hast been water'd this Day with the Streams that flow from the Paradise of God! I that was worthy of God's Hatred, how have I been this Day
ad-

advanc'd ! What great Things hath God done for me ! What Honour hath he laid upon me ! What Majesty, what Glory hath he conferr'd upon me !

I feel the Fire of God within me : My Heart grows hot within me : I will sing and give Praise : Who would not praise thee, that hath seen thy Goings in the Sanctuary, as I have seen them this Day !

Holy Father, thou hast this Day embrac'd me ! Holy Jesus, thou hast this Day pour'd out Blessings upon me ! Holy Spirit, thou hast this Day manifested thy self unto me ! Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, thou hast humbled thy self this Day to a dead Dog !

O, how often have I return'd to the Vomit ! how often have I gone a whoring from thee. Yet behold, the Lord, instead of the Bread of Affliction, hath given me the Bread which came down from Heaven ; instead of the Cup of Trembling, hath given me the Cup of Salvation ! I will remember thy Name, O Lord, I will speak of thy wondrous Works.

O my Lord ! I see thy Hand is not shortn'd, neither is thy Strength abated. Thou that hadst Mercy on the vilest Sinners formerly, extendest thy Goodness to such miserable Creatures still ! I have drawn Water this Day from the Well of Salvation, even from thy Wounds, O crucify'd Redeemer ! Thou hast look'd upon this Prodigal

digal this Day : Thou hast run, and fallen
on my Neck, and kifs'd my polluted Soul.

Oh Honour ! Oh Dignity ! Oh Compassion ! Oh Charity ! Oh Love ! Oh Mercy ! Oh Goodness ! which the Redeemer of the World must speak of ! Even they whom he hath redeem'd from the Hand of the Enemy, and gather'd them out of the Lands, from the *East*, and from the *West*, from the *North*, and from the *South* ; they wander'd in the Wilderness, in a solitary Way, they found no City to dwell in ; Hungry and Thirsty, their Soul fainted in them ; then they cry'd unto the Lord in their Trouble, and he deliver'd them out of their Distresses, and he led them forth by the right Way, that they might go to a City of Habitation.

O that Men would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful Works to the Children of Men !

Open to me the Gates of Righteousness, I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord. This is the Gate of the Lord, into which the Righteous shall enter ; I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my Salvation. The Stone which the Builders refus'd, is become the Head Stone of the Corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes.

If I forget thee, O my Jesus ! let my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth. Thou hast regarded my Tears ! Thou hast
taken

The Fire of the Altar. 135

taken Notice of my Supplication; thou hast given me my Heart's Desire; thou hast not withheld from me the Request of my Lips!

Thou hast given me Leave to come to thine Altar this Day, and to lift up my Hands towards thy holy Oracle! Thou hast fed my Soul this Day with royal Dainties, with Peace and Pardon, with a Right to thy Promises, and Offers of eternal Life, with Assistances of thy holy Spirit, and the Riches of Grace and Mercy.

This is the Food which the holy Bread and Wine have represented to me this Day, and with this Food thou hast blessed my Soul. In this Food will I glory, of this will I make my Boast. This is Food for immortal Spirits! This preserves Souls through the Power of God unto Salvation; this is Bread which fades not away; this is the Wine which may be had without Money, and without Price.

O my God! Thou requirest no Price, but a wounded Heart, no Gold, no Silver, no Jewel, but an obedient Soul: I bring it, I offer it. I beg thou wouldst be pleas'd to accept of it; thou deservest it; thou may'st challenge it, it's thine. Thou gavest it me, thy Spirit made it willing; thy Grace did melt it; thy Fire burnt away the Dross; thy Goodness purify'd it; and thou wilt cleanse it more and more.

All the Good I have is thine; from thee it flows; from thee it springs; thou conveyest it to my Soul. Thou openest mine Ears; thou awakenest me; every good Thought I have is thine; every good Inclination, every good Resolution, every good Intention is thine; thou influencest every good Action I perform. My Praise shall be of thee in the great Congregation, I will declare thy Faithfulness and Salvation.

O, how good is God to *Israel*, even to them that are of a clean Heart! O make me clean, that I may feel thy Goodness; thou art my Physician, I am thy Patient; thou art my Father, I am thy Son; thou art my Master, I am thy Servant; thou art my Teacher, I am thy Disciple: Thy Spirit is good, O lead me in the Way everlasting.

God forbid that I should glory in any Thing, save in the Cross of Christ and him crucify'd. O that the World was crucify'd to me, and I unto the World! I will rejoyce in thy Love, my dearest Lord: I have seen thy Power, Wisdom, and Goodness.

I see what Pains thou takest with my Soul to make it happy, to drive away the Night of Ignorance from it, and to make me know, there is no true Bliss, no true Comfort but in thee.

Thou teachest me to overcome my spiritual Enemies: Blessed be the Lord my Strength

Strength, which teaches my Hands to war,
and my Fingers to fight; my Goodness and
my Fortrefs, my high Tower and my De-
liverer, my Shield and in whom I trust.

Thou preventest me with thy Grace;
thou givest me the Earnest of eternal Glory;
by thy Spirit I am seal'd unto the Day of
Redemption: Thou art my past, my pre-
sent, and my future Good: *Let the Peo-
ple praise thee, O God, let all the People praise
thee.* O that all Men might know and love
thee! O that all Mankind might feel thy
Power and Glory.

O thou, who art the chiefest among ten
thousand, the Upright love thee; and a-
mong these, I, the unworthiest of thy Ser-
vants, presume to love thy Name! Thou
hast made me to walk upon thy high Pla-
ces, and in the Bitterness of my Soul hast
refresh'd my Spirit: Thou hast pardon'd, I
hope, all my Sins, and blotted out mine
Iniquities as a thick Cloud.

I expect thou should'st forgive me much,
and therefore sure I must love thee much:
Thou hast borne my Grief, and carry'd my
Sorrows: Thy Torments have given me
Ease, thy Reproaches have procur'd my Glo-
ry, and thy Misery is the Cause of all my
Happiness.

Therefore I will put on the Lord Jesus
Christ: Thou shalt be my Garment, my
Crown, my Diadem; I will sing unto thee,

as long as I live. I will sing Praises unto my God while I have a Being. My Meditation of thee shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord.

O, my Lord, I rejoyce to hear that every Knee bows unto thee; I would have all the World fall down before thee and worship thee. I rejoyce in all the good Things that thou possessest, not that I expect thou should'st make me Partaker of all, but because they are in thee, and they are thine, and thou dost dispense them to thy Creatures, according to thy Pleasure.

I rejoyce, O Lord, in all the glorious Gifts, Perfections, Accomplishments, Virtues, and Graces of Christ Jesus: I rejoyce in all the Mercies thou hast bestow'd on the blessed Angels, in that Purity and Innocence, in that Brightness and Splendor, in that Bliss and Felicity, they are crown'd withal, in their Care of thy People, in their ministerial Offices to those that shall be Heirs of Salvation.

I rejoyce in all the Graces thou hast dispens'd to thy holy Apostles; in their miraculous healing of the Sick, in their powerful preaching, whereby the World was converted, in their Knowledge and Illumination, in their Zeal and Fervour, in their Patience and Humility, in their Watchfulness and Heavenly-Mindedness; for in all these I see thy mighty Arm, and thy strong Hand,

Hand, and the Light of thy Countenance:
And all that they have done and said, is
written for my Learning.

I rejoyce in all the Blessings thy Saints
enjoy, in thy Calling them to thy marvel-
lous Light, in adorning their Souls with so
many resplendent Virtues, in honouring
them with the lofty Titles of Children, and
Brethren, and Friends, and Kings, and
Priests; in visiting them with thy Salva-
tion, in assisting them with thy Power,
thy Spirit, and Influence, in their Dangers
and Necessities, in helping their Infirmities,
in purifying their Souls, in enlivening their
Spirits, that they may not be asham'd of the
Gospel of Christ Jesus; in keeping them from
all Evil, in rescuing them from Temptations,
in giving them a happy Death, and Promise
of a glorious Resurrection.

I rejoyce in all thy Mercies to poor Sin-
ners, in calling them to Repentance; in
entreating, admonishing, and beseeching
them to be reconcil'd to God; in forbearing
of them; in thy Patience and long-Suffer-
ing toward them; in waiting for their Re-
pentance; in adjuring them by Bowels of
Mercy, by the Blood of Jesus, by the Wounds
of a crucify'd Redeemer, by the sweetest
Calls, and the greatest Motives to Serious-
ness and Holiness; in thy receiving the
Penitent; in forgetting all their Unkind-
nesses, and forgiving the Affronts they have
of-

offer'd unto thee; in remembering their Sins no more, and drowning them in the Depth of the Sea, even in the Blood of the Lamb, which was slain, from the Foundations of the World.

I rejoyce in all thy Loving-kindnesses to thy Church; in giving her thy Word, thy Ordinances, thy Sacraments; in making her thy Bride, thy Spouse, and thy Favourite; in ordaining the Lord Jesus to be her Head, her Husband, and her Protector, and nursing Father.

O Jesu! I rejoyce in thy Incarnation, in the great Mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the Flesh, justify'd in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preach'd in the World, believ'd on by the Gentiles, receiv'd up into Glory.

I have Reason to rejoyce in thy hypostatick Union, in thy being the Prince of Men and Angels, and in that all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge are in thee. I rejoyce in thy sending the Comforter into the World, in thy Promises, in thy Offers, in thy Providences, in the Provision thou hast made for our Souls and Bodies.

O give me a thankful Heart for my right Shape, for my Health and Strength, and temporal Advantages: O, what a Mercy is it, that thou hast caus'd me to be born in the Light, in the true Religion, in a Reli-

The Fire of the Altar. 141

Religion free from notorious Errors and Superstitions.

How am I beholden to thee, that thou hast kept me from so many Opportunities of sinning against thee, from abundance of Temptations, from innumerable Occasions of Evil!

How many have been snatch'd away by sudden Death, and I am alive yet! How many have been deny'd the Grace of Repentance, which thou still offerest to me; that I have a Heart to pray and praise thy Name, what a mighty Token of thy Love is this!

Let Heaven and Earth praise the Lord. Let all the Angels in Heaven praise him. Let every Thing that hath Breath praise the Lord; praise thou the Lord, Oh my Soul!

I remember, O Lord, how, when I have gone through the Water, thou hast been with me, when I have pass'd through the Fire, thou hast commanded the Flames not to kindle upon me, I remember, when for a small Moment thou hast hid thy Face from me, how with everlasting Kindnesses thou hast visited me again! Oh, how often hast thou deliver'd me from the nethermost Hell! When I have been ready to sink in the Mire, thou hast pull'd me out of the horrible Pit, out of the miry Clay, and set my Feet upon a Rock, and establish'd my Goings.

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When the Snares of Death have encompass'd me, and the Pains of Hell laid hold on me, thou hast deliver'd my Soul from Death, mine Eyes from Tears, and my Feet from falling.

I will walk before the Lord in the Land of the Living : What Reward shall I render unto thee for all thy Benefits ! How loath hast thou been to behold my Ruin ! How hast thou call'd after me, *have Mercy on thy self !* With what Convictions hast thou follow'd me ! What Checks of Conscience hast thou given me !

Oh, my Lord ! Thou shalt have all the Glory ; thou art worthy to receive Blessings, and Honour, and Majesty, and Dominion. How precious are thy Mercies ! How rich thy Loving-kindnesses ; to do so much for Dust and Ashes, for a Worm, for a Grasshopper, for a Creature that hath abus'd thee, and rebell'd against thee ! Oh, what Goodness is this ! My Understanding is not big enough to comprehend it.

I'll acknowledge thee for my God, I'll own thee for my Redeemer ; thou shalt be my King, my Master, my sovereign Lord ! I will consecrate all my Labours, all my Services, all I have, and all I am, to thy Glory ! Oh, what a Favour is Forgiveness of Sin, which I trust I have receiv'd this Day !

Think

Think, O my Soul, what a Bondage thou art deliver'd from; think, what a Slavery thou art free'd from. Now thou art at Liberty; now thou may'st serve God cheerfully; now thou may'st freely go on from Virtue to Virtue.

This is a Day of Thanksgiving, this is a Day of glad Tidings; this is a Day that ought to be remember'd: O my Jesus! Thou hast this Day visited the Earth, and water'd it! Thou hast made it rich with thy Showers; thy Grace hath dropp'd upon me this Day, like the Rain on the mown Grass.

Oh, order my Steps according to thy Word for the Future! Let me see thee in every Mercy! Teach me to admire thee in every Blessing! Let nothing seduce my Heart from thee! When any Afflictions come upon me, let me receive them with Thanks and Submission! When I stumble, do thou support me; when I fall, do thou raise me; when I go astray, do thou seek me; when I err, do thou direct me; when I slacken in thy Service, do thou strengthen me.

Keep the Door of my Senses, that no impure Thing may enter there. Let my Heart be thy Temple. Teach me to enquire daily what Progress I make in thy Way. Let thy Word be a Lanthorn to my Feet, and a Light unto thy Paths. Let no
evil

evil Company discourage me. Let thy Providence direct me to Persons that love thy Law, and in these excellent Ones let all my Delight and Comfort be.

O my Lord, my Life is hid in thee! But when thy Glory shall appear, I shall be like thee! Speak Lord, for thy Servant hears! Let none of thy Commandments be hence-forward grievous to me! Open thy Hand and feed my Soul! When I am tempted, lay no more upon me than I am able to bear.

Give me Courage to strive to enter in at the strait Gate. Let me ever look at the Things which are not seen; for the Things which are seen are temporal; but the Things which are not seen are eternal.

Thy Kingdom, Lord, is not in Meat and Drink; but in Peace, and Joy in the holy Ghost: Give me a Taste of it! Let Eternity be always in my Mind! Into thy Hands do I commend my Spirit, my Body, and all the Concerns of my Life.

Let thy Grace come down upon me plentifully! Let me not do thy Will negligently! Let me live in the Thoughts of another Life, and let those Thoughts encourage me to follow after, that I may apprehend that for which I am also apprehended of Christ Jesus!

Oh hear me! Oh answer me! Oh pity me! Oh relieve me! Oh come in! Oh succour

cour

cour me, thou that art the God of my Salvation, and my Tongue shall talk of thy Righteousness all the Day long.

Let all those that seek thee, rejoyce and be glad in thee; and let such as love thy Salvation say continually, *Let God be magnify'd!* I am poor and needy, make Haste unto me; O God! Thou art my Help and my Deliverer: O Lord, make no tarrying. *Amen, Amen.*

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